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ON SEX
IN THE
WORLD TO COME,
AN ESSAY

BY THE
REV. G. D. HAUGHTON, B.A.

“ What if Earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on Earth is thought.”

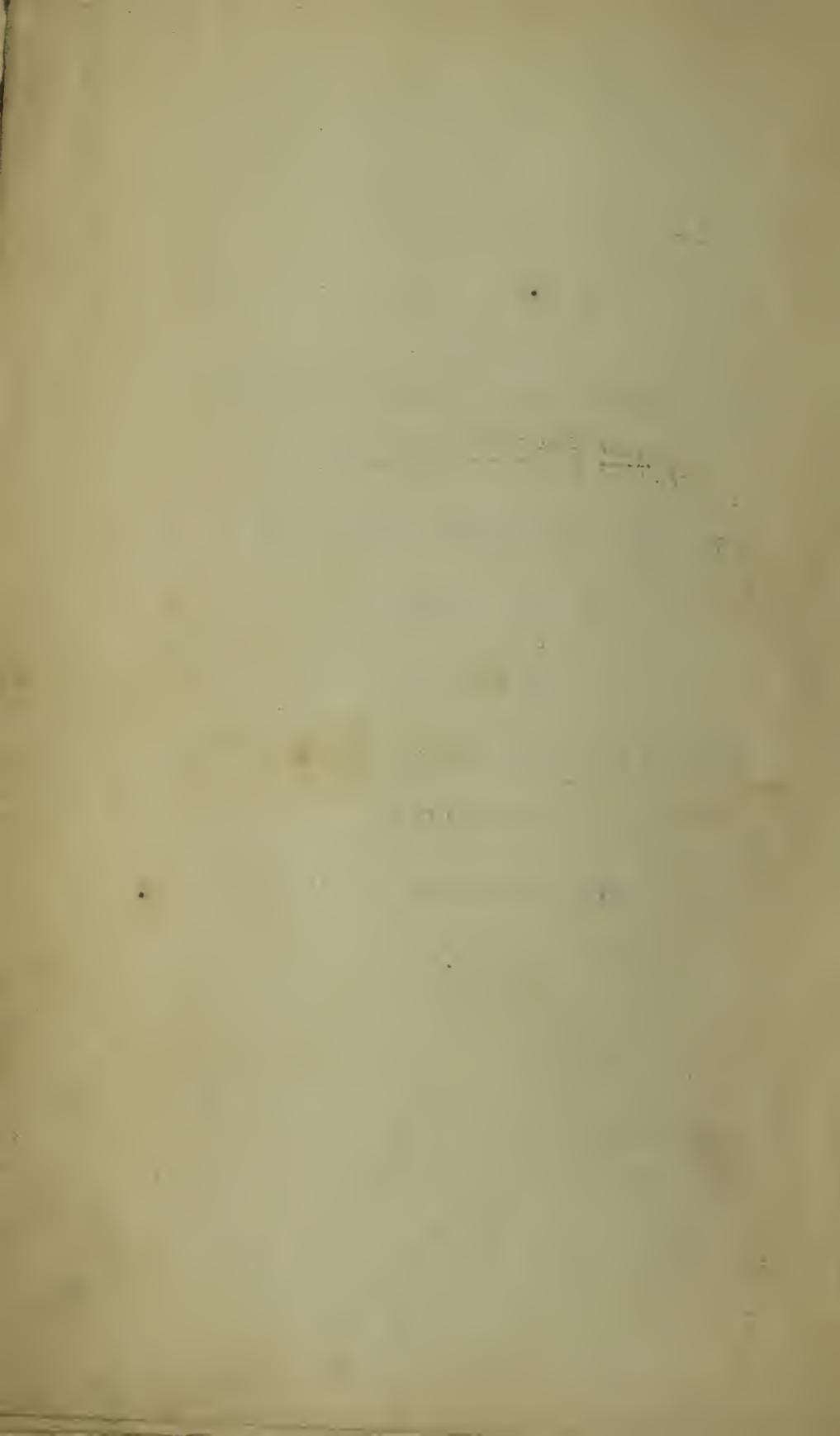
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1841.



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TO THE
REV. FREDERICK HENRY TURNOR BARNWELL,
THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED,
WITH THAT HIGH RESPECT WHICH IS DUE
TO HIS GOODNESS
AND VIRTUES,
AND WITH THE ASSURANCE, THAT THE VIEWS
CONTAINED IN IT
WILL HARMONISE WITH
HIS OWN.



P R E F A C E.

The Author has selected a subject, which from its novelty and boldness has surprised many, but which he trusts it will be found that he has discussed in a sober spirit, and with profitable results.

It has long appeared to him that Religion has been deeply injured by the uninteresting representations which are usually given of the Life to Come. In the solution which he offers to the great Question involved in his discourse,

the Author believes that he has raised a foundation for more cheering hopes, and brighter anticipations.

Nor can any sound objection be urged to the handling of this topic, for there is no question which may not safely be discussed, if it is done in a spirit of Reverence and Faith. Be this as it may, whosoever shall open these pages may receive the Author's assurance, (which from his sacred profession can scarcely be deemed necessary) that he will find in them not one unhandsome thought, nor one equivocal speculation.

The Reader will perchance remark the frequent reference to names and to authority which occurs through the Volume; and it was natural that the Author should make it, for he feels too earnestly his own entire want of weight, not eagerly to cling to support, wherever he can find it. And it has given him a

double pleasure when he can do so, by quoting some snatch of beautiful and flowing verse, as he is thus enabled to present the inquirer after truth with “apples of gold in network of silver.”

London, July 20th, 1841.

INTRODUCTION.

CHAPTER I.

OBJECT OF THE PRESENT TREATISE.

IT is conceded on all hands that during our present earthly existence, we can form only the *most general* ideas as to the nature of the life to come ; and this is *so true* that most minds avoid all thought and speculation on the subject, and content themselves with views of futurity so dry, barren, and unattractive, that we can scarcely wonder that they are not more influential.

It was a sense of this, which led the author of the Natural History of Enthusiasm to exert his great powers on this subject in his Physical Theory of another Life.

Our ideas on this sublime subject must be *general*. It does not follow hence that they must necessarily be *superficial*. They may be based on the profoundest view of the wants and tendencies of that wondrous nature with which we are endowed—and if our views of the next life are deep, they cannot fail to be attractive. All hearts respond to the line of the Roman Dramatist.

“ *Homo sum, humani nil a me alienum puto.*”

The ordinary and prevailing views on this subject are not attractive, because they do not “ come home to men’s business and bosoms,” nor satisfy the instinctive yearnings — the essential demands of our nature.

We may refer to two distinguished writers, as not satisfied with the popular representations of a future state, but complaining of the vague, lifeless, and almost repulsive form which that doctrine assumes. We may refer to a sermon of the illustrious Chalmers, enforcing the strict materiality of the next world, and that on most certain warrant of Holy Scripture—and lamenting that the opposite idea so generally obtains which, as unconnected with all present experience, can have no hold on our present affections.

Archbishop Whately in his first volume of Essays utters the same complaint, though he does not pursue the idea far. He remarks however the constant reference to *persons* rather than *things* in the scriptural accounts of the heavenly world, and how we are introduced, not into a world of shadows—pure, but passionless, and quite unlike their former selves,

and whom we can dimly, if at all recognise, but into a world of remembered loves and friendships, exalted, but still the same—into a world of moving interests and the most vivid reality.

That our theories of the life to come are sadly defective, and needlessly unattractive, will be assented to by every man of more than ordinary sensibility and imagination, and thereby Religion itself is the loser. The commonplace and the dull, may not note a deficiency, but spirits more “finely touched” will find it an atmosphere too thin to bear their pinions, or to exalt their hopes.—The profanity of Lord Byron in sneering at the common accounts of the next world, and of the employments of the blest, has been often and justly condemned. Yet the tone of it is reprehensible, much more than the substance. For the substance of it is repeated in the work first alluded to, and which has proved the forerunner of so many

splendid additions to our literature.—It is there repeated, and with a serious piety, which is beyond suspicion.

Impressed with these considerations, it appears to us, that one important element in all calculations of our future destiny has been strangely overlooked: we mean *the fate of Sex in the world to come*.—The subject is a new one; it has never, that we know of, been even approached. The floating idea we conceive to be, that all distinction of Sex will in the celestial regions be totally obliterated, and forgotten quite. It might be truer to say, that there is no fixed idea or thought upon the subject. Many minds would be too sensitive even to discuss it. We will not disparage, but do not experience such sensitivitiy.—We propose then to consider whether the distinction of Sex will outlive the present transitory scene, and constitute an eternal difference.

None but the most thoughtless will say that the answer is self-evident, either the one way or the other. *It is then a Question*, unless Scripture solves it, and none can be more interesting, or more momentous. But *does* Scripture solve it? Where that speaks, let the whole world be silent. Where it does not speak, we are free to speculate, but not to dogmatise,—modestly to entertain our own views, not to exercise a lordship over the creed of others. It will be our duty to examine that point, and to inquire whether Inspiration sheds any light over our present path, whether it contains any declarations in reference to our subject, and to what they amount.

If it shall appear, to use a phrase of Addison, that there is a “sex in souls,” and that this distinction is in its nature eternal, and that to destroy it, would be to destroy our individuality, and thereby our

mental and moral identity—then such a conclusion would draw after it a host of interesting and momentous consequences, such as may regale the imagination of man, excite his fancy, and refresh his heart; and this under the assurance, that *that heart shall live for ever*, with objects fully commensurate to its high desires, and unutterable longings. That Intelligence moreover we would conceive as residing in no airy or impalpable form, nor as floating, an almost bodiless thing, amid clouds or nothingness, but as encased in a frame which shall be solid, though celestial, moreover one

“ Tinctured with holy blood, and winged with pure desires.”

It would be our duty to develope the consequences which would flow from such a conclusion. To edify, it must be undertaken in a sober spirit, and what we need scarcely add, in profound submission to the revealed word.

How that word may bear upon the question before us shall be the subject of the next chapter.

Let no one open these pages, expecting to find aught which may gratify a prurient, or too voluptuous fancy. We will premise the salutary caution which the most eloquent of divines, we had almost said of men, prefixes to his section on “Chastity in the Holy Living.” “Reader,” says he, “stay and read not the advices of the following section, unless thou hast a chaste spirit, or desirest to be chaste; for there are some who will turn the most prudent and chaste discourses into unclean apprehensions; like choleric stomachs, changing their very cordials and medicines into bitterness. I have used all the care I could in the following periods, that I might neither be wanting to assist those that need it, nor yet minister any occasion of fancy or vainer

thoughts to those that need them not. If any man will snatch the pure taper from my hand, and hold it to the devil, he will only burn his own fingers, but shall not rob me of the reward of my care and good intentions."

CHAPTER II.

“ To the Law and to the Testimony.”

ISAIAH.

WE advance to a serious enquiry—Does Revelation, which has brought Life and Immortality to light, shed any rays of illumination over the interesting Question—Whether throughout the whole of the coming eternity the distinction of Sex, (which, be it remembered, is not merely outward and physical, but inward and vital—whose outward and visible peculiarities, great as they are, are still

less than those which are invisible,—and as these latter are mental, would therefore seem to be indestructible) shall remain an everlasting distinction, having been so designed and constituted by the hand of the Creator !

Whatever is mental or spiritual seems naturally and rightfully immortal.* What would be able to change it, so far as to make it lose its essential peculiarities, its innate and inherent differences, would also seem able to destroy it. But this is not to be thought of—For not a material atom, not the tiniest grain, can be annihilated; how much less then can Spirit? which in its nature, and we would proudly say *by its own right*,—by right of its parentage, is unchangeable and immortal. For

* Mental and spiritual, when the latter term is not used theologically, have precisely the same meaning. In them is included the whole mind of man—his will and affections, as well as his understanding.

all Spirit is an emanation from the Infinite Spirit, and, if we may reverently apply the words, “ of one substance” with Him. And as such, it owes no fealty to Time. We may address it :—

“ Thou, thou art not a child of Time,
But daughter of the Eternal Prime.”

Or, as Sir Thomas Brown, in that exquisite prose poem, *The Religio Medici*, so glowingly says—“ It was before the Elements, and owes no homage to the Sun.”

Now in this world there is a male spirit, and there is a female spirit. And these two, though they agree with each other, and harmonise most admirably, and when duly assorted, make the sweet music of humanity, yet can they never be confounded—never for a moment, even in thought.

And why do they agree so well together

precisely because they differ—and because that difference is not skin deep, but extends over all the thoughts and intents of the heart. Insomuch that when, as will sometimes happen, the difference is less, or is *ostentatiously made to appear less*, than is generally the case, such a circumstance invariably operates in the one sex to the loss of esteem, and in the other to the loss of attraction, and is a felt diminution of loveliness—and a sense of the truth of this so extensively prevails, that for one among the fair, who would wish to be thought a Die Vernon, there are fifty who would assume fears which they never felt—a compassion more tremulously tender—a delicacy more coy and shrinking than credence can readily be given to. Nature unerringly points out to them wherein the secret of their dominion lies.—It is not in that they agree, but precisely in that they differ. The sexes combine

because there is an “impassable gulf” between them.

Well might the Apostle say, speaking of Marriage, which arises out of this constitution of things. ‘It is a great mystery !’ May that mystery be never lessened, would be our fervent hope ! an utterance out of the deep of our heart. We cannot conceive without pain of Man, and still less of Woman, becoming in the next world any more than in this

“ A *self-sufficing* Thing,
An Intellectual all in all.”

complete but in isolation, perfect and therefore unlovely !

Such would be the voice of Nature, but we must not anticipate the conclusion to which a more extended inquiry may conduct us. It

must be arrived at not merely from a wish of the heart however deep and fervent, (though this alone would be an immense argument,) but from a searching and all-sided view of whatever resources either Reason or Revelation may offer to our inspection.

It will be conceded that the Sexes in their trains of thought and feeling are essentially distinguished. To use the very German phrase of a German writer, women are the "like unlike" of ourselves, and this unlikeness is the parent of love. Now our position is, and from it we shall not easily be driven, that this difference being mental (we would rather say spiritual*) is therefore innate and inextinguishable.

* For the term *mental* in its use, though not by derivation, refers chiefly to the dry light of the intellect, *only a part* of man's nature. Whereas the term spiritual is all embracing

An accidental difference might disappear, not so one that is essential and therefore eternal. We could as easily conceive a Soul annihilated, as one of its primal and essential attributes destroyed. And, in the case before us, the difference is all prevading—

“ Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart,”

modifying every thought, colouring every feeling.

This reasoning is metaphysical, but it may not on that account be doubtful or obscure.— On the contrary, we conceive that it is as clear as crystal.

But though consistently with our doctrine, an essential element like that of Sex, of which, as of the Spirit of Life, one cannot say, It is here, or, It is there, for it is felt “ all in every part,” which moreover *makes us to be what we*

are, can never in all ages to come, be either lost or disappear, yet may we, by the ever-augmenting force of moral discipline, be changed from glory to glory, till we gather an angelic purity and grace—so may we, on the other hand, by resisting all gracious influences, fall from worse to worse, till we assume a character truly diabolic.

Such is the tendency of our nature, though either consummation is rarely attained in this life. Hence the profound and eloquent saying of Coleridge, to be found in his Table Talk—“If we are not rising upwards to be angels, we are sinking downwards to be fiends.”—But in either case, whether of improvement or deterioration, this ultimate point may be reached, without in the slightest degree interfering with that distinct mental nature with which *Sex* originally endowed us.

We may illustrate this by what will happen

to our bodies. We believe in the ‘Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting.’ Moreover in our recognition of each other in that future state. Now this recognition will be effected (among other means) by the moral and mental type of the individual countenance surviving death. Thus our features under the influence of good or of evil passions, of malignant or of gracious emotions, are daily assuming those lines of expression, which nothing, not even death, can efface. Thus, after our great change, we shall re-appear “the same, yet, Oh! how different!” our forms refined and brightened, but still familiar. The loved characteristic lineaments will still be there, and, though changed, not unremembered.

Thus in the great vision which occurs in the first chapter of the Apocalypse, the best beloved of the disciples recognised the person of his Divine Master, though transformed and

glorified. Though His countenance was as the 'sun when shining in his strength, and his voice as the sound of many waters, and His eyes as a flame of fire,'—yet still the recognition was perfect—he saw that it was one like unto the Son of Man. Now this, though a vision, may yet embody an exact truth.

And thus, too, if we may descend from sacred to human authority, does the Poet Laureate, in his beautiful epitaph on the lamented Bishop Heber say, that thousands who had never seen him on earth may yet, from the admirable likeness of him in the statue of Chantrey, be able to recognise him in a future state—

" And know him when they see his face in heaven,"

and in strict accordance with this view

does the author of the Christian Year—that treasury of beautiful feelings and fancies enshrined in musical verse, strikingly say,

“That so before the Judgment Seat,
Though changed and glorified each face,
Not unremembered we may meet,
Through endless ages to embrace.”

What we have just said is of course a mere illustration, and will not be mistaken for an argument. Unless we were to maintain, which is no more than true, that every fact in the world of matter has its counterpart in the world of mind, of which it is the type and adumbration.

This then is our present statement, illustrated as above, that no progressive exaltation of mind or character in the next world will at all threaten or endanger the quite indelible features of the sexual mind.

Before we appeal to Scripture, it was well to examine the antecedent probability of such a catastrophe. It would be also well to inquire, before we take in hand the Sacred Volume, what grounds we have for hoping to find the desired information. We ought to consider whether it may not be among those "mysteries," of the kingdom of heaven, which is no part of Revelation to disclose.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of Inspiration is that it supplies every thing for utility and nothing for curiosity, a full measure of knowledge on certain points seems not vouchsafed even to the angels, for there are some things which they "desire to look into," and desire in vain. When Paul was rapt up into the third heavens, he heard sounds, and saw glories which it was not 'lawful' for him to reveal. Perhaps it was

not possible that human languages, even when employed by the loftiest inspiration, *could* adequately reveal them.

Nor is this all. One other reason may be, that the scene 'within the veil' may have so much similitude to our present existence, and its delights to the fairest of earthly enjoyments, that if the imagery of it were fully detailed, the incitements to virtue might be more constraining, not to say overpowering, than Divine Wisdom has chosen to set forth. Whereas by letting clouds and darkness rest upon the world unknown, and using only a general language, and vouchsafing only general assurances of complete happiness, we can better glorify God by a free obedience, and a spontaneous choice.

Lovingly and persuasively to invite us is one thing, imperiously to constrain us by excessive inducements is quite another. Now

might not the indulgence hereafter of the purest and sweetest emotions which can inhabit a human breast, be said to be an inducement of the latter description? Here, then, is an ample reason for the want of all allusion to it in the very brief notices with which we are furnished of a future world, even though our idea may be well founded.

Some would take up the opposite position and say, that no revelation *could* be made of the interests or occupations of the state of blessedness, because they are so utterly at variance with our present ideas; that, therefore, they could not engage our sympathy. But wiſelier deemed, as we conceive, our mighty Milton, when suffering his noble thoughts to wander through Eternity, in the words of our motto he meditatively surmises—

“ What if Earth

Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on Earth is thought ?”

An insuperable difficulty would attend the other theory ; and let its advocates explain, how they can reconcile it with entire personal identity. And this, we confidently affirm, is a task beyond their strength.

For if in another world, our thoughts—feelings—sympathies—will be all so utterly changed, as that the magnitude of the change is in our present state quite incomprehensible ; —if, then, we shall cease to interest ourselves in what now delights us,—if, then, we shall not think the same thoughts—entertain the same purposes—nor feel the same passions—in what sense can we be said to *be the same* ?

And, if not *absolutely* the same, how can we be made the subjects of moral retribution ?

So that this error seems to strike at the very Judgment Seat of God.

Moreover, under that idea, how is this world a school of discipline for the next? How is it a state of probation? for that 'bespeaks a fore-gone conclusion.' It implies that the several qualities which we are called to exercise here, will all be brought into play, and found valuable hereafter. It implies that the main difference between the two states will consist in this, that, whereas here our faculties are cruelly confined, and pant for a wider field and a nobler manifestation, that there they will find it, and

"Have ample room and verge enough,"

their several characters of heaven or of "hell to trace."

Now, what possible preparation can a world

like this, in which the emotions of the heart are in hourly exercise, and in which our capabilities of love or hate are often so severely tested form for an existence, which shall be bloodless and passionless as the life of fishes?

Such an Elysium might have its attractions for those of the feeble and passive Hindoos, whose favorite proverb is—‘To lie down is better than to sit, to sleep is better than to wake, and to die is better than to sleep.’ But with whom else is it likely to find acceptance?

We can conceive that a suspension of all thought on the subject may account for the reception of such a belief, but is it creditable to us as men, or salutary to us as Christians, not to make the future life an object of continued and steady thought? If our treasures are beyond the grave, there will our hearts be also. But how chilling and repulsive, how

desolating and cruel is the creed, that those hearts are destined in a long hereafter not to find their counterpart objects, Eros longing for Anteros, and for ever longing in vain. Or what is equally wretched and even dismaying, that they shall there cease to desire *any* objects having, by passing hence into the celestial spaces, been visited by an unaccountable and total paralysis ; such a paralysis would amount to extinction—to an extinction of that part* of ourselves which has here formed our most delicious happiness.

We wish our opponents joy of either supposition. Such a state would indeed be a state of repose, but it would be such repose as

* In calling the heart a *part of ourselves*, we use a popular language. We believe with Brown, that the mind is *one* and *indivisible*, not divided into different departments, only passing into different states.

we could not envy. Rather would we exclaim with Wordsworth, when contemplating the still life of some Gypsies who had remained long in one encampment :—

“ Better storm and strife,
By nature transient, than such torpid life.”

We could even conceive that all noble spirits would look back with regret on the scene they had left, which, with all its gloom and troubles, is still brightened with the beams of affection.

To return to the point whence we set out. Is the element of Sex, as destined to disappear amidst the ascending and brightening changes of Creation, or else to continue everlasting, and thereby, as an unavoidable consequence, greatly to modify the relations, and to control the movements of the upper world, likely to

occupy a place among the disclosures of Revelation?

We answer—No—Its office is by setting forth the principles on which we shall be judged, and propounding for our imitation the Great Examplar of all virtues, with promise of supernatural aid, to enable us so to pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal. But what that goodly inheritance may be is beside its purpose to unfold. If it conducts us safely through the solemnities of the coming Judgment, it has amply discharged its function.

It establishes the fact that both Sexes are equally accountable, and equally ‘partakers of the grace of life.’ It is the Charter of our Voyage to the shores of Eternal Life. It will land us there, if we obey its instructions, but it is no *Map* of the Celestial Country—It is the Book of Salvation. But solely occupied with

the achieving of that deliverance, it leaves in its majesty of darkness the scene beyond it. It furnishes us with weapons for combat and for victory, but to what uses that victory shall be turned, or what spoils we shall reap, or what future struggles may await us, all these things are left undecided. They do not interfere with man's present duties, or his future accountability. And these form the theme of Revelation. They are first, and last, and midst, throughout it.

We do not, therefore, anticipate any illumination from it in the conduct of our future speculations. It will be said—Is not this then forbidden ground? Are not these unlawful speculations? Is the indulgence in them a sign of a spiritual mind?

Why, if it is but as the beatings of an eagle against its cage, it may evince the nobility of our nature, and if it shall invest with an air of

greater reality that, which is to most but as a realm of spectres and shadows, will it not have served a most useful end ?

They, whose theology is limited to a narrow list of prosaic abstractions, and who resist all approach of further enlightenment,—who conceive the more tame and emasculated the character is, the meeter does it become for glory, (i. e. the more *inglorious* it is) who overlook the magnificent poetry of the Bible, and fasten by choice on its most abstract and least interesting points—whose Gospel is all contained in the Epistles, aye, and a very small portion of them, which, moreover, they do not understand, but twist into a narrow pedantic interpretation, in flat contradiction to the rest of the Sacred Volume, and to its pervading spirit;—whose pass-word at the celestial gates is not the assuming a godlike nature, but pronouncing the Shibboleth of a party;—who conceive that

Christianity is a Dogma, whereas it is a Spirit ;
whose idea of heaven may be gathered from the
old hymn—

“ Where congregations ne'er break up
And Sabbaths have no end.”

—Who conceived that the Almighty has given to man imagination, only that he may not soar, and fancy only that it might be crushed, and affections only that they may be tortured—denied—and, finally eradicated ;—these, and such as these may not relish our views, but with these we have no sympathy, nor desire any communion.

But come the gentle, the pure, the devout, the Catholic in spirit, to whom fanaticism is a horror and a crime, and see whether we do not unfold much which may nourish your hopes, and open out to your view the most consolatory prospects.

Ye, to whom nature's radiant smile is a full assurance that your own brightest anticipations *must* be in accordance with the plan of the all-bounteous Creator—Ye, to whom, without love, the garden of Eden would be but a wild. By that too you mean, not an unimpassioned universal benevolence, an equal regard for all that breathe, but love of that more special kind, which alone deserves the name.

It is your suffrages we desire to win, it is your approbation that we alone covet.

CHAPTER III.

“ What damned Error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament ?”

SHAKSPEARE.

We are aware, that whoever takes up the Sacred Volume with an already formed theory on the subject of his investigation, is likely to see all objects by the light of that theory, and to find it in the end not reversed, but supported and confirmed. This universal predisposition so fatal to the attainment of Truth, shall be borne in mind, and steadfastly resisted throughout the coming inquiry.

The fear however of arriving at a wrong result is extremely small in this case — for betwixt the two boards of the Bible, there is only one passage which directly, and not more than two or three which inferentially bear upon it. It is quite true that a much larger list might be found, and with a considerable air of plausibility. But our address is made not to the professional or technical theologian — not to the acute textuary—classes of men who examine the inspired record in the spirit and with the temper of lawyers, who love to raise a fight, though it be with a shadow—who arrest a prophet in his “ fine frenzy,”—and compel him to speak with legal precision—who form a system of doctrine compact and pedantic—and resist as an insult every attempt at extending its limits.

We have in our eye also their notable device of determining all things by the “ analogy of

faith," which analogy or system has been constructed by themselves; and thus a truth, though delivered in never such clear and direct terms, must yet be rejected, if it does not instantly *fall into line* with that exact square of belief, against which they fondly persuade themselves it is said, that 'the gates of hell shall not prevail.' They little deem

"There are more things in heaven and earth
Than are dreamed of in *their divinity*."

With what force has not Campbell combated this arrogant error in one of his Dissertations ! We will illustrate it shortly.

It is certainly declared, there is none other name under heaven whereby we can be saved, but only the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. But is it not also said that 'God is the Saviour of all men,' and that

in *every nation* he that feareth God, and work-
eth righteousness is accepted with him ;' yet
the force of these latter declarations is quite
set aside, because seemingly in contradiction
to the former. The heathen are excluded from
hope, because a tyrant principle, generally
taken up with more fervour the exclusive and
one-sided it is, lords it over the understanding,
and represses the otherwise irresistible emotions
of the heart.

Again, we are told that God is ' no respecter
of persons,' and that He will ' judge according
to every man's work,' but the man of the
Five Points has read somewhere of Predestina-
tion, (for the term certainly occurs in Scrip-
ture) and on the strength of it, judging by
the 'analogy of faith,' and having much the
same opinion of the moral nature of the Deity,
as we find in Holy Willie's prayer (an admir-
able and not exaggerated picture of Calvinism

by a poet ; who, however his name may be a shaking of the head to the religious world, has nevertheless, by his Cotter's Saturday Night, made Religion his debtor,) he not only closes the gates of Mercy against three-fourths of the human race, as we have seen in the former instance, but also against a still larger proportion of his baptized brethren, and thus establishes a system of corrupt favoritism even in the court of heaven, and at the bar of Eternal Doom.

It is not to men like these that we make our appeal, but to those whose minds are genial and expansive. (We love that pregnant and expressive word—*genial*. It was a favourite of Coleridge.) But what can be less *genial* than the temper of the theological system-monger ? If then, good Reader, you are not such, but candid and rational, you will, we doubt not, be satisfied that in the short

ensuing investigation we have not deceitfully handled the Word of Truth. Our way is to begin at the beginning.

In the first chapter of Genesis we read, "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness—So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; *male and female* created He them." These words seem to imply that the *two* sexes reflected the *one* image of God—that either sex alone would have formed a most mutilated and defective representation of the Divine Qualities. It was His will that our elder brethren of Creation, the various orders of the unseen world should admire, as reflected from the face of our first parents

+

"A full orbed Deity
In His whole round of attributes complete."

That they should not see Judgment divorced

from Mercy, Reason from the Affections, Valour from Pity, Authority from Tenderness and Endearment. He desired to see a true resemblance of His own unutterable Perfections, and either Sex would have presented by itself but a darkened and deformed likeness. It may be that man would have formed the less imperfect copy of the divine Original, but still one extremely defective. For to woman has been vouchsafed one of the brightest manifestations of the Creator's moral nature. That intense love and pity which still yearned over a lost and ungrateful world, and which no amount of its guilt and pollution was able entirely to quench—that unrestrainable compassion of our Heavenly Father to a ruined race, “The sounding of His bowels and of His mercies towards us,” which after all our rebellion and defiance still made Him say, ‘Surely they are my children, so He was their Saviour,’ these

qualities have no adequate counterpart in the nature of man.—He may forgive several times, but at length he may be completely steeled against further access of pity—after a certain extent of transgression, he may become quite implacable.

But it is not so with his mild companion. Her kindness is quite inexhaustible. The deadliest injury can scarcely overpower it. In the great play of Shakspere, Desdemona is represented as wishing to be thought to have died by her own hand. For when Emilia asks in presence of Othello ‘O ! who hath done this deed—she replies

“ Nobody ; I myself ; farewell ;
Commend me to my kind lord ; O ! farewell !”

This we deem an extravagance, but it marks

the sense which Humanity's finest interpreter had of the almost limitless extent of female forgiveness.

The Almighty, then, has made Woman the chief depositary of His most godlike attributes. Mercy and Long-suffering. In *her* breast they endure the longest, and burn the brightest. But their most wonderful effulgence is seen in Maternal Love. For that is proof against all the causes which usually extinguish affection in the heart of man. What affecting instances of this are continually brought before us in the proceedings of Courts of Justice, and in our Police Reports! Not disease, nor deformity, nor even idiocy, nor ingratitude—‘sharper than a serpent’s tooth,’—nor worldly disgrace and ruin are able to blunt or to baffle it. Who can understand this save He who inspired it, and of whose deity it is the purest

emanation ? or, better still in the lines of
Wordsworth—

“ How nourished there for such long time ?
He knows who made that love sublime,
And gave that strength of feeling great,
Above all human estimate.”

It might suit the boyish levity of Lord Byron to sneer at the tale of Betty Joy and her concern for her idiot offspring, nothing in heaven or earth seeming to her mind so important as the safety of her child ; yet all, but the headless and heartless, will admit that, in making it the subject of a poem the author obeyed a worthy and legitimate impulse, and entitled himself to our thanks and admiration.

“Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.”

We rejoice to find that our favourite ‘ King of Verse,’ is winning his crown of Amaranth

even on the stage of public opinion, which once seemed so adverse. Even by the admission of the fashionable and worldly Bulwer his empire is more intellectual than that of either Byron or Scott, and he has founded a dynasty more deeply seated in the hearts of men and more enduring.

This is a digression, but we were concerned in the honour and fame of one who has, in various parts of his works, so nobly illustrated our position—that the compassionate Fatherhood of God is reflected the brightest and in its most unselfish form from the heart of Woman.

Hence results this clear conclusion, that her creation was not an after-thought of the Infinite Mind, to supply a felt necessity, or merely to grace and embellish man's existence, and to solace his vacant hours—but that it being the divine plan to exhibit His own image to the universe, and to multiply His

likeness, she fulfils the high purpose of being the coequal representative with man of that image, for that without her it would have been exhibited, marred and broken.

There is a language held by the Apostle Paul in the eleventh chapter of the first of Corinthians, which seems at first sight adverse to this view, where he says of man, that he is “the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man, for the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man; neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.” This seems merely to refer to the fact, that woman had not an independent origin like man, but was “taken out of him,” or, as he afterwards reminds Timothy—“Adam was first formed, then Eve.” But that more may not be inferred, and that the equal dignity of both, and their equal need of each other may clearly appear, he further

states, “ Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman ; but all things of God.”

But if the doctrine be true that the man, even in his state of primeval purity, as he came fresh from the hands of his Maker, was yet never designed, nor from what we may call the one sidedness of his faculties, was ever capable of forming a perfect image of God, what then shall we say in the case of Christ ? He was strictly a man, yet was He the irradiation of His “ Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.” If manhood then is necessarily incomplete, one-sided, and correlative, never designed (laying aside all physical considerations) to stand alone, or to have a substantive existence ; if ‘ all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works ; ’ if all moral

loveliness and rectitude is the result of the combined action and influence of the sexes; or, as Lady Morgan well expresses it in a recent work, in which we are happy to remark a reverence for religion which appeared not in her earlier productions, "if all moral beauty and uprightness is a middle term resulting from the joint influence of both natures," if in the absence of the other, the decisions of the one sex would be merciful even to weakness, and of the other—stern even to rigour, then a high question would arise, how the Redeemer's manhood was a state of absolute pefection.

That it was so, it were impious to doubt; we hold that His nature was originally and transcendently perfect—all sufficient, self-balanced, self-sustained. But if the account just given be correct, how could this be? would His attributes, in that case, have been self-centered, as we maintained that they were?

Have we not, therefore, much reason to infer that Our Lord's human spirit was an impersonation of our entire nature—the purest ideal of both parts of humanity. The author of the Christian Year seems to have hovered on the verge of such a speculation where he says in his beautiful ode on Matrimony,

Living he owned no nuptial vow,
No bower to fancy dear,
Love's very self; *for Him no need*
To nurse on earth, the heavenly seed.

This idea derives great countenance from the fact of the Miraculous Conception—The ordinary course of events was in this instance suspended. He was without father. This has been employed as an argument by Pearson, by Horsey, and by all standard divines, ancient and modern, to evince that our Saviour's nature was absolutely pure—that He received a

genuine yet unfallen humanity, for that it was a pure production of the Holy Ghost, without the intervention of ordinary generation.

But this involves a most abstruse metaphysical question, touching the origination of the soul. It seems to imply that the soul is *generated*, and that, as in this case, there was no generation, therefore, Christ's human spirit was an immediate creation of God. Now this idea springs from the Material Philosophy, which we hold to be as shallow as it is base. Philosophers of “purer fire,” would maintain that matter may be generated, but spirit never; for that these two are contrary the one to the other; they are quite heterogeneous, and belong to opposite worlds—they are distinct creations, though marvellously and mysteriously combined. Motion can only generate motion, matter can only produce matter. In its most attenuated and subtle and refined form it

has no more affinity to thought than in its grossest. For nothing is like a thought but a thought.

Yet an eminent Physiologist and Material Philosopher, the surgeon Lawrence, has said (in some speculations as rash and silly as they were impious and atheistical, but now we believe happily recalled,) that though ordinary matter could not think, yet he conceived that medullary matter might! Well might we say in parody of Madame Roland's exclamation at the guillotine — “O sacred Philosophy, what nonsense is uttered in thy name!”

We would express our notions on this subject in the words of that noble Confession of Faith which is worthy of the name of Bacon. “I believe,” says he, “that at the first, the soul of man was not produced by heaven or earth, but was breathed immediately from God: so

that *the ways and proceedings of God with spirits are not included in nature : that is in the laws of heaven and earth* ; but are reserved to the law of His secret will and grace ; wherein God worketh still, and resteth not from the work of Redemption as He resteth from the work of Creation, but continueth working to the end of the world."—

Mind, then, cannot be the product of physical and mechanical causation. It seems in all cases a direct emanation from the Infinite Mind, in all cases an immediate creation of God, yet brought by Him into mysterious alliance with matter, and gradually unfolding its energies through the instrumentality of the latter. And the control which it exercises over the world of sense, and, in a superior degree, over the body, is not by reason of any natural affinity, but by the Deity's arbitrary appointment.

We conceive, with Watts, that a spirit would have no power over a grain of matter, but that it receives it by an Almighty Fiat. And this view only deepens the wonder that substances so opposite, of natures so completely extraneous to each other, as thought and matter, as *things* and *persons* are, should yet be brought into such lovely and marvellous combination.

But some men will say—Whatever issues at once from God must be pure, ‘ His work is perfect,’ and therefore each human spirit, if an immediate emanation from Him, must issue forth in a state of absolute purity ! Now, the reverse of this we hold to be true. We believe in original or birth-sin, and that we are all naturally inclined to evil. But how far this may be owing to the presence of a corruptible body, who shall presume to say ?

We are on the margin of deep waters, and must candidly admit that to the objection

started, no adequate answer can be given. It runs up into the old question of the Origin of Evil, and its awful permission in unabated virulence, through thousands of years in this lower world, and for much longer periods of unfathomable antiquity in the world unseen, and among beings, compared with whom Man is but the creature of yesterday, and an upstart.

The difficulty in both theories is substantially the same, in either case the mystery remains. That an impure nature should be transmitted by an established ordinance, and subsequent guilt *necessitated* in all by an original defect of moral constitution and not by choice or mere imitation of others—this, we say, is equally inexplicable, whether we believe in the independent creation or generation of the human soul.

It will still be urged in answer to our views—Is there, then, no inheritance of moral and intellectual qualities ! do we not find that *they* too are transmitted as well as the peculiarities of face or figure ? do we not find that virtues—talents—are often hereditary ?—We reply, and do we not find that they are often *not* hereditary ? and how do you account for the difference ? The son of Cicero, instead of inheriting a superior mind, or practising the rules of that ethical treatise so affectionately inscribed to him, was remarkably dull, and prided himself on being the greatest drunkard in Rome. The son of Lord Chesterfield, to whom were addressed those elaborate disquisitions on the principles of good breeding, was remarkable for the breach not for the observance of them. He inherited neither his father's grace of mind, nor his exterior politeness. Is it not even a trite remark,

that the sons of *great* men are rarely *great*? Extraordinary mental *fertility* seems usually succeeded by a season of *sterility*.

Now here is a phenomenon which it would puzzle our opponents to account for. If the entire man, body and soul is generated, how is it that each human spirit is not the *fac simile* of its prototype? How is it that the qualities of the same family are often not the same, but contrasted? that one brother is intellectual, and another not so—one poetical and another prosaic—one valorous and another timid?

Some of these are not accidental, or evanescent, but great and eternal differences pointing to quite varying careers, and opposite destinations. We hold that they cannot be accounted for, but on the belief in the separate, independent original of each one of us; albeit, in conformity with some general law of resemblance—otherwise Shakspere could have no more mind

than his father, and his offspring would have not less than himself. We would say, slightly varying the words of the Apostle, that God giveth each body a spirit, as it hath pleased Him, and to every body its own spirit—its own peculiar spirit, more or less differenced from every other.* God crowns his ordinance of generation with His gift of a spirit, and thus the two parts of man are of separate origin—“That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual.” The first is of the earth, earthly; the second is from God.

Does not scripture seem to intimate as much when it speaks of Him as the *Father of the*

* This was the metaphysical creed of the late Edward Irving, whose “colossal intellect”—to use his friend Chalmer’s phrase regarding him, all competent persons will admit.

Spirits of all flesh. Of the Spirit we are expressly assured by Solomon, that God gave it.
(*ECCLESIASTES* xii., 7.)

We may, in short, gather our view of this subject, without any straining, from that declaration of the wise man, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”

We have been almost unwillingly drawn into this discussion from a consideration of the manner in which divines argue on our Lord’s Supernatural Conception, not that it is at all a digression, for if the views we have unfolded are sound, they will serve greatly to accredit the representation before made of the essential and eternal difference which Sex involves, which is thus disentangled from every thing which can be conceived as transitory, and referred at once to the workmanship of God. That work we may be assured, was not laid in

fading colours, but calculated to endure. The female mind was a beautiful idea of the Divine Imagination, and realised, that, conjointly with man, she might reflect the image of her Maker, which he could not do alone. Even Adam, before his fall, while he yet retained his full allegiance to heaven, could not do it alone: for though sinless, he was imperfect, and it required the blended influence of both natures either to secure their own happiness, or to fulfil the will of their Creator. Moreover, it was designed, that as by marriage they became one body, so by love and by an exquisite and thorough interpenetration of each other's wishes, affections, thoughts, and sympathies, they should become one spirit, and so reflect the moral likeness of their Maker.

Now in the case of Christ, a difference in the manner of conception (a fact which none deny but those whom we scarcely allow to be

Christians at all) would seem to imply a difference also of nature. And that difference, besides his immaculate purity, seems to consist in this, (as we before said) that His human spirit was absolute in itself — that the elements in Him were so intermingled as to present in one person those moral beauties and graces which were not before or since combined, but must ever be sought separately. Hence we may observe in Him a marvellous and unique perfection. As His garment was without seam, woven from the top throughout, so did His character present a smoothness and entireness which has never been approached. Hence also we may remark a want of prominence in any one faculty : no one quality stood out in contrast with the rest, but all appeared in due order and proportion, as occasion served. Activity and meditation, gentleness and fervour, patriotism and univer-

sal philanthropy, absolute self denial in one who mingled easily and constantly in society, and who made a generous allowance for the infirmities of men—an humble outward lot with godlike majesty—a delight in the quiet scenes of domestic love and friendship with a capacity of facing the rudest trials and most appalling dangers--these qualities were all reconciled and appeared in Him in unbroken harmony. Having ever in view the horrors of the "second death," and therefore, mainly eager for the salvation of souls. He yet felt humbler cares, and would not suffer his followers to feel the inconvenience of the loss of a single meal; He displayed the character of the Jehovah of the first covenant who amid His resplendent greatness and the government of His unbounded empire was yet alive to earth's lowest wants, and made a humane provision for the comfortable sleep of the meanest

Israelite. “ If thou at all take thy neighbour’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down ; for that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin : wherein shall he sleep ? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear ; for I am gracious.” (EXODUS, chapter xxii.)

While our Lord at one time could describe in terrific images His second coming (a congenial subject as it seems) at another we see how profound and thrilling was His admiration of flowers, a subject akin to all gentler feelings. All qualities in Him were so blended as to make Him the bright mirror of *our whole humanity*. He was at once—

“ Our sun and soothing moon.”

And being such He became the “express

image" of the unseen God. Now this was what our first parents, not individually, but together were designed to be. This was the ideal in the mind of the Supreme. But Christ (*the second Adam*) realised it in His own person. It was good for Him to be alone. But the reverse for them, as the faculties of each were originally incomplete, and in their very construction implied and opposite.

Such appear the natural inferences from that first passage which contains the divine decree for the existence of our race. As Jesus afterwards said (from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female) and not an intimation is any where given that this distinction shall hereafter be confused.

There is, however, one passage which at once comes to the point—we allude to that strange conversation between our Saviour and

the Sadducees, relative to the fate of her who had been the wife of seven brothers.

“ Then came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection ; and they asked him.

“ Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man’s brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

“ There were therefore seven brethren : and the first took a wife and died without children.

“ And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

“ And the third took her ; and in like manner the seven also : and they left no children, and died.

“ Last of all the woman died also.

“Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

“And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage.

“But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

“Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.”

Three Evangelists have recorded it, and its strangeness, as well as the memorable reply given to it, may well account for this distinction. This question was not proposed in sincerity, for the Sadducees were the Free-thinkers of Israel, who said that there “was

no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit." They were Epicurean Materialists. They were Sensualists, and almost Atheists, regarding God as a Power, or a Principle, not as a Person. They were those fools who said "in their *hearts* there is no God," though they owned His existence with their lips. For unless we believe in God as a Being who regulates the fortunes of *Individuals*, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and who listens to, and is moved by, prayer, we do not believe to any profitable purpose.

The deity whom they worshipped was "the Lord that commandeth the waters; the glorious God that made the thunder." With the rest of their tribe, ancient and modern, they conceived that if the Eternal interfered at all, it must be on what are called *great occasions*, but that His general

administration was guided by fixed, inexorable laws. But such is not our God—the God whom we adore, for in his character Holiness is still more prominent than power—‘ He is Holy, Holy, Holy,’ the God of individuals, of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, as well as of worlds and of systems.

This question, then, was proposed in the very spirit of scoffing. We may wonder that any answer was returned. One, however, was vouchsafed, and, as usual, remarkable for its comprehensiveness and depth. “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God!” These words refer to the more general question of the resurrection of the dead, and the Sadducees’ denial of it; not to the more special and confined one of what arrangements the element of Sex will pre-suppose and require in the future world. For we

should search in vain for any Scripture to which they could be referred as bearing upon this latter subject.

It was the just remark of Bacon that our Lord's replies were more directed to the thoughts of the inquirer's heart, than to the terms of his question. Besides, we must remember, according to Saint John's last verse, what a minute portion of His sayings is come down to us, and that a discourse, which may have lasted for hours, is condensed in a few pregnant sentences.

The words just quoted fitly join on to the 37th verse of Luke xx. "Now that the dead are raised," &c. They doubted God's will, or even His power to effect it. To the latter doubt all nature, and to the former the Scriptures, most fully reply. The testimony of both is well given in one verse of Isaiah. Shall the herbs and the flowers revive to a second

spring, and not man? “ Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead.”

To the special enquiry the answer is positive, that ‘in that world’ there will be no marriage: but it is vague, as assimilating our future lot to that of the angels, beings with whose condition and circumstances we are so imperfectly acquainted.

But what we know, and what we may safely conjecture with regard to their high fortunes, exalted as they are so much above us in their bright and burning stations, will fitly form the subject of a distinct chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Angels ever bright and fair.”

HYMN.

WHATEVER difference may exist among men on the subject of Angels, their nature, employments, and, above all, their relation to ourselves, yet the popular imagination of all nations seems agreed on this, that between us and them there is one great point of resemblance—that they have the human form divine, merely with the addition of wings. No artist

has ever represented them otherwise, and no poet has otherwise conceived them.

Though we bear about with us a corruptible body — “ this muddy vesture of decay” as Shakspere calls it, yet, strange to say ! it is cast in the only mould which corresponds to the dignity of an intellectual being. We have an heavenward countenance—

“ And looks commercing with the skies.”

They resemble us in this, and every resemblance is of the “ family of dearness.” But it does not follow that our inability to conceive the embodying of soul in a frame of nobler type than the one we now wear is our only reason for attributing one of the same form to these mighty beings ; we have likewise the aid of tradition. For if a ladder has at any time, or in any, however remote part of the

world, been let down, as in Jacob's vision, between earth and heaven, and some members of the heavenly host, been seen ascending and descending upon it, or a rainbow :—

“ Meet pavement for an Angel's glorious march,”

has served as a bridge to tempt them down ; if, we say, so strange an occurrence has any where taken place, is it possible that mankind should forget so glorious an apparition ? Is it conceivable that the memory of it, as well as its exact circumstances, should not be handed down ?

It is only common things that perish ; in proportion as anything is out of the common way it is memorable. Every extraordinary action *must* live, and so must any extraordinary thought. They both defy oblivion. The world *must* give ear ; it cannot forbear hearing,

even if it would. For such things strike us in the first instance with a vivacity, which causes the mind afterwards to revert to them. It is not that we will not, we cannot let them die. There is enough of envy and of jealousy in the composition of the bulk of mankind to prevent any one person, be he actor or author, from acquiring a towering and gigantic fame—*if only they could help it*. Have we not seen in our own days a combination, or what at least seemed like it, to tear from the brow of living merit its well-won crown? Mankind feel like the Athenian, though they lack his candour, who voted for the banishment of Aristides, because he was surnamed the Just.

But to return. The belief that the Angels have the same general form and contour of body as ourselves may be accounted traditional, as well as natural in itself, and recommended by our inability to conceive any other

form equally expressive. We are not sure that we might not say even more than this.

We consider it as in the highest degree probable that the die in which our bodies are cast is the one universal die used throughout the creation of God for all spiritual beings. This probability is vastly heightened on reflecting that it has been consecrated by the most exalted use. The Eternal Word when 'made flesh' appeared among us enshrined in such a tabernacle. It seems, then, that He, the highest and most honoured of all creatures, and ourselves who, as far as we yet know, are the lowest of all God's intelligent servants, yet agree in this ; so that we may exclaim—If such a form were worthy to enshrine the Deity—what living intelligence wherever found throughout space, may not be proud to wear it ?

Now this fact, if such we may term it, can-

not fail to excite a feeling of brotherhood among the various races which inhabit the boundless empire of the Eternal. It is appealed to as an argument for substantial equality among the most distant orders of mankind, and the similarity of wants which it engenders is a foundation for kindness and compassion. We may then congratulate ourselves that there is one universal type of corporeity between the most dispersed tribes throughout creation's furthest bounds.—This is surely a delightful anticipation. In feeling it will bring the remotest exceedingly near to us, who thus may be said to "claim kindred" with us,

" and have their claims allowed."

But this oneness of general contour may be quite compatible with an amazing variety in

other respects. When God saw all the things which he had made, He pronounced them "very good," but they were not all alike. Unbounded diversity appears on all sides of us. It may be said "to reign and revel."

Some would even extend this principle to religion. And a poet, not with intentional levity, has said that the Great Father views with pleasure a fair variety of modes of worship; that He owns and accepts them all. Such an idea we quite repudiate. But while we do so, we would fain not be included in the lists of those narrow-minded, whose meagre and mutilated faculties suffer them to feel no tolerance for any form alien to their own; who seem to think that one phase of religion is applicable to all natures and all countries, and would even, if possible, enforce it by measures of coercion.

Yet if for instance the meagre and parsimo-

nious Presbyterian system, as followed by the Church of Scotland, were to pervade Christendom, what a dull monotony would appear ! Or, still worse, if those plebeian and democratic platforms of Church *Mis*-government which we see among the Seceders, were universally erected, what a gloom would overspread society ! Neglect or contempt of literature would be the least considerable in the long train of accompanying evils—all free and vigorous thought would be repressed, or scowled into silence. The graces and embellishments of life would all fade from the scene, while the evil star of Fanaticism would ascend. One consolation, however, would remain, the same which cheered the spirits of the heroic Royalists during the great Rebellion, the assurance that so hateful and ignoble a domination must needs be short.

Or, to come nearer home, if ever the Church

of this Empire, no doubt the best and purest that ever existed, were the one and only type of Christianity in the world, should we even in that case have room for complete satisfaction? should we have no loss to feel? no deficiency to regret? We should. There is a church, though bitterly calumniated, yet whose aid could not well be dispensed with. Let Protestant zealots smile or sneer, our appeal is to the humble and devout—to refined sensibilities, not to the coarse and common-place.

How much, then, of exquisite and unworldly feeling—how much of picturesque effect, of pomp and beauty of worship must have been quite unknown, if the Church of Rome had never existed! But for her, would not the fine arts have almost gone to decay? Has she not every where nobly sustained the cause of poverty, and made it not to be ashamed? and will not all these things per-

suade every one, whose heart is not maddened or absolutely taken away from him by the demon of religious party, to think of the errors of that church 'more in sorrow than in anger,' and incline him on all occasions to—

" Speak gently of our sister's fall."

Now what we have just advanced as to the use and charm of variety, applies with equal force to the case of political governments. Who, but a cold-blooded economist, "a Formula," and not a man, as Mr. Carlyle would speak, would desire to see all nations under one Régime? We have wider sympathies. We admire the military and almost feudal monarchies of Eastern Europe. We could not see the waning of the Crescent

without regret and apprehension.* There is certainly one government to which we scarcely wish well, but regard with almost unmixed dislike. It seems, however, in a state of transition, and all things are tending to that issue. But who would not forgive our gallant offshoot in the plenitude of their sanguine ignorance, for making a grand though perilous experiment, signal as has been its failure.

A truce, however, to this rather fanciful digression.—We own a propensity, to use Paley's expression, “to go off at a word.”—If this is attended with some disadvantages, or if the pedantic formalist may disapprove, there is still a compensation. A volume addressed to one faculty, or exclusively to one

* Of course we do not here allude to the question how far such an event might subserve the introduction of a purer faith.

theme, may indeed exhaust the subject, but it equally exhausts the reader. Our idea of a choice discourse is not that it resembles one of the great military roads on the continent, and flies direct to its aim ; we would rather compare its progress to that of—

“ A river winding at its own sweet will ”

and which though it has its certain terminus in the ocean, yet flows, in its passage thither, through the most diversified scenery, through dark woods, and open smiling meadows.

This is that property which gives such a charm to the variegated pages of Jeremy Taylor, to the rambling eloquence of the *Religio Medici*, and to the discursive Essays of Montaigne. It is somewhat analogous to what in private life captivates so much, to that bending facile

temper which, however, may combine with a firm adherence to our ultimate aim.

We have said that though all intelligences may have the same outline of form, yet, otherwise, sufficient variety may exist. Equality is no principle of the dispensations of God. The various gradations as they rise, each above the other, in their "orders bright," may be distinguished by the superior fineness of the material of which their bodies are formed. There may be in this regard as much difference as exists between common stone and porphyry, or the marble of Sienna. Even now there are some who seem to belong to the 'porcelain clay' of human kind. There may be eyes in the planet Mercury that can gaze undazzled on a sun seven times hotter and brighter than that which now 'rains its lightnings' on India or the Line—a sun, compared with which our luminary is but a cloudy veil. There may be

as much difference as between an ordinary pebble and an emerald or a sapphire. Or even where strictly the same material is used, as in our present state, yet are not the different grades of intellect and civilization and even of refinement and the subtler traits of character which obtain not only between nations and tribes, but even between individuals, sufficiently marked and discriminated.

There is no confusion here. The Negro and the Grecian type of countenance well denote the real interval that separates the two races, and how well too are the classes of a country distinguished (we, of course, allude not to minute but to grand lines of division) the high-born and the low—those who inherit lofty cares and those who, sunk in the lowly valleys of life, hear no voice but the voice of necessity. These can never be mistaken. Aspiring thoughts are reflected in elevation of countenance and a

freer port, while coarse, homely or rugged features sufficiently indicate ‘a destiny obscure.’

So, then, moral and intellectual inequality between the great divisions of mankind may be truly and adequately represented, even where the *same material* is used—the flesh and blood out of which we are all made. And though the intervals between the orders of the invisible world are surely vaster than any we can now conceive—from those who, like ourselves, conduct their operations by a cold and slow process of doubtful ratiocination (to those fiery creatures whose law is an unerring impulse, those are the ‘Ardours’ of Heaven) yet may not the employment of other substances though with the same configuration sufficiently discriminate them?

A difference may also obtain as to the simplicity or complexity of structure, and the con-

sequent varying degrees of assimilation to mind which their bodies enjoy.—The bodies we now wear are of the utmost possible complexity, of an excessive intricacy, and hence as we should naturally conjecture, and as by experience we find, very imperfectly adapted to the operations of thought. We have in this stage of being all the appetites and wants of animals with the duties and aspirations of spirits, we are “half dust—half deity.” The degree of harmony then which may be found between two elements so opposite, and apparently uncongenial, as mind and matter may exactly correspond to the dignity of each order of creation. As our organisation is complex so that of the highest rank of being may be homogeneous in substance, and so simple in construction as to be adapted with absolute perfection to enshrine intelligence.

Our whole view of the subject presents this

striking analogy and just proportion.—As all intelligences have in common God's highest gifts—the powers of Mind and Heart, so they bear an external badge of this agreement in having one Form, but as the gradations of their endowment with, and improvement of, these mighty prerogatives are innumerable, so these are abundantly marked in the ways above alluded to.

These remarks premised,—we now pass to what we know or may conjecture as to the nature or employment of those ministering spirits we term angels, with a view to consider whether aught may be elicited therefrom, bearing upon our main subject.

In approaching this question, on its first presentation to the mind, it is strange to reflect that, while in imagination we almost humanise the angels in form, yet we do not conceive of them as having minds at all corres-

ponding to our own. We deem that their lives, or rather their eternity, is passed in so tranquil and even a course, that the same terms when applied to them scarcely denote the same passions and emotions.

A stronger instance of this cannot be given than in the case of suffering. It is in the nature of all men to compassionate the distressed. Even guilt, in an aggravated form, does not quite divest us of this merciful tendency. It is true that this principle may be kept in utter abeyance, while the punishment of the offender is yet uncertain. While there is a possibility that he may yet escape and triumph in unrequited wickedness; while the blood which he has shed does yet cry for vengeance from the ground, his sufferings, intense as they may be, may be quite unheeded. Imagine him now as doomed and reconducted to his cell, pale and wasted with agony, his

false confidence all vanished, his last hour approaching.

“ Sickness and pain before, and darkness all beyond—”

We cannot witness all this, and not feel our sympathies, once departed, now fast returning upon us. As through the bars of his dungeon we regard him with wringing hands and with a lighted stare does he not seem to appeal to us in language irresistible. “ Am I not, lost and ruined as I am, am I not even yet a man and a brother ?”

We do not desire his pardon, nor forget the paramount demand of justice ; we do not even wish a mitigation of his sentence ; but with all this we would fain see him ‘ pass peaceably,’ our gentle wishes go with him—we would hope to see him sink to his last sleep, calm and reassured,—and when at length the worst is over,

we would not disfigure his remains, nor scatter them about in mockery or insult.

Now let us take an instance of another and a milder kind ; it shall be one of those cases where the mischief done is greater, yet where the guilt is less—where the author of the wrong has made a wider havoc of human happiness, yet has incurred a weaker resentment. It is one of those cases which has so often puzzled moralists. Shall one death make a murderer, and millions a hero ? Shall the robber or the forger die with infamy, and shall the statesman whose pernicious laws have occasioned a general scarcity, who has taken men's lives by taking 'the means whereby they live'—shall these escape ?

It is, we believe, quite certain that Anne Boleyn contributed to the downfall of Katharine—a detestable crime ! to scheme the supplanting of an indulgent and confiding mistress,

and that mistress a Queen and a stranger ; yet let us imagine her, in her lonely cell in the Tower, her eyes streaming with tears, and writing letters of forgiveness to the tyrant who had so often caressed that fair form, yet had now ordered it to be mangled. When we afterwards see her go forth to her terrific end with so much of dignity, and her natural gaiety breaking out, like the sun, in her last moments, after a season of so much horror and gloom, who would not, while acknowledging a just retribution, yet feel the yearnings of no ordinary grief ?

And Cæsar, on the ides of March, though his youth had been licentious, and his age ambitious and unscrupulous, though, besides waging continual wars, he had concurred in sanguinary proscriptions, yet, when we remember the scene in the Capitol—the ‘ three and twenty wounds,’ and that one stab which was

felt more keenly than all the rest, that one which 'quite vanquished him,' and which was instantly more than avenged by that brief yet immortal exclamation—when we see him, even in his last agony, haunted with that ever-present sense of the graceful, adjusting his mantle, that he might fall decently—which of us in such case would not be moved, which of us would not forgive his errors, and bewail his end?

To come to nearer times—to the case of Napoleon. Of what loss of life, of what wide extended devastation was he not the author? draining the youth of France by his unceasing conscriptions, and engaging all other nations in an exhausting struggle, yet, when once fastened, like Prometheus, to the rock of Saint Helena, there was an instant revulsion of feeling in his favour, and cold and narrow must that breast have been, which did not conceive

a vivid resentment against the teasing restrictions of his ungenerous gaoler. So deep is the sympathy with fallen greatness.

Whence then is it, that this godlike principle seems suspended in the case of those who have fallen from a much greater height, who "grew giddy and proud, walking upon the battlements of Heaven, beholding the glorious regions that were above them." Are not they, too, living, thinking, sensitive beings, feeling either joy or sorrow with a keenness that we now can scarcely imagine, with the intense vitality of spirits, who are "all eye, all airy ear?"

Even the language of divines is much too unmeasured on this subject. The terms of abhorrence in which they speak of the rebel angels is always unqualified, profound as they must acknowledge their ignorance to be of the whole subject. As if they could conciliate the

regard of the Most High by speaking with cruel bitterness of those whom He certainly made, and who still bear a relation to Him. In a much better and larger spirit does Michaelis, the great German divine, wisely and humanely remark, that fallen though they be, yet that it is not right to insult the fallen. He even says that we are not justified in regarding them with detestation. We will not say so much, but still we maintain that according to that mysterious passage of Jude a milder tone is in accordance with the spirit of those who know them better; for that Michael the Archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said only "the Lord rebuke thee."

But if the tone of divines is reprehensible, what shall we say of common parlance? of the exceeding levity with which the whole subject

is treated, and the awful name of the chief of that host pronounced? It is the universal condiment of wit and mirth all over this green earth—the very spice of jest-making. Yet, if we believe the scriptures, these are dread realities and ought to be handled in a soberer mood.

But it is not from this part of the heavenly host that we can hope to reflect any light on our researches, but rather from those of them, whose ministrations to us are healing and beneficent.

Yet, ere we quit this more painful branch of the general question, let us remark that this strange insensibility to so much and such awful misery, revealed to us as existing in another though very remote region of creation, is not to be accounted for solely by the fact of its being accompanied in this instance with enormous guilt (for that is the condition of

misery every where: besides we have seen that guilt, however great, cannot altogether quench the power of pity) but much more by the want of the softening influence of personal communication. Here there is no visible, though there is still a real intercourse. How often do we conceive what we think a quite unconquerable dislike to some public character, from our condemnation of his principles or his conduct, yet may a single interview suffice to make us love the man, and to cease our hostility.

And this reveals to us a profound truth, that there is something deeper in man than his opinions or even his qualities. Far beneath the region of argument or conscious discourse lies the *individual's very self*, of which his words and actions are often a most insufficient index. Hence the best known of us is more or less under a cloud to the rest of the world. And if Bacon says that the best part of beauty

is that which no portrait can convey, we may extend this observation even to that more exact portraiture of a man's mind contained in his writings.

There is a yearning to unveil ourselves, to disclose the very "*arrière pensée*" of our hearts, and a teasing inability to do it adequately. Hence that passionate cry of Byron, already become a powerful and successful writer, that, ~~after~~ all he must be content to "live and die ~~unheard~~," and be to succeeding generations scarcely more than 'a voiceless thought.' This he said, comparing the riches which he could ever hope to bring to the surface with those which he knew must for ever lie in the sunless caverns of the mind, unguessed by man, and unknown save to God and to his own spirit.

Now the acute pain afforded by this conscious impotence of self development is the very source of that pleasure which we receive from the works

of some great master of the human heart. What we have long felt yet have struggled in vain to utter, we find that he has completely developed. A thought which seemed too subtile and evanescent for the languages of men, he has consolidated in a durable expression—what seemed so airy he has arrested in its flight, and dragged it from the skies to earth. And if he is a poet, he has not only done so, but has arrayed it in forms of unfading beauty :

“Clothing the palpable and familiar
With golden exhalations of the dawn.”

Now, *a priori*, we might enquire whence is it that we are so delighted to find what was already in our own possession ? What we find in our own bosoms why need we elsewhere seek ? Is it merely that we rejoice at a triumph of skill, in whichever of the fine arts it may

happen to be achieved, at an astonishing mastery over Languages, over Colours, over Sounds? It is far more than this. It arises from that intense craving for sympathy, which is man's noblest attribute, and which most approximates us to Him whose name is Love.

Now, if the exceeding desire to utter forth ourselves be so universal (and such it is, whether we wish for the world's hearing, or are content, as humbler natures are, with the private ear of friend or lover,) is there not one portion of our nature in which the inability to do this is more felt than in any other? Is it not in the affections? or speaking of woman, we would not say 'a portion of,' but her entire nature; all her faculties being so steeped in and interpenetrated by the affections.

And is this, our more sacred self, to be denied expression here, and to be doomed to extinction hereafter? Nor should we deem it

a compensation that in the future state we could better trace the laws of light, or explore the consequences of gravitation.

But our opponents will say—We do not believe in their extinction. No—but you insist on their reappearing in a degree so passionless and modified, so exclusive of individual regard, so independent of sex, and of the fervours of personal attachment that we scarce thank you for the concession—you conceive that the affections we shall feel there will be more generalised, and therefore present only a faint reflection of those which so sweetly agitate our bosoms here. And herein we differ.

But to pursue this subject farther at present would be to interfere with our more immediate topic—viz. The nature and offices of the angels, or rather what we may discover or surmise of the first from the disclosure of the latter. We

have seen our Saviour distinctly declare, that to their condition our own will hereafter be assimilated. We shall, therefore, be better prepared to discuss it after this investigation.

We have complained of the unfeeling tone of insult or derision, (so strongly contrasted with the awful reserve of Scripture) in which we allude to the doom of the Lost Angels. They were once happy, and once 'shouted for joy' in the morning of creation. And Milton represents them as still animated with noble sentiments, as still discoursing on the highest themes, and exploring the mysteries of their being. He represents them as still entranced by the power of music, and inspired by it to exploits of daring. There is a depth here which none of us can fathom.

And in the parable of Dives we may remark that he is made to utter a most benevolent wish that Abraham would send some gracious mes-

senger to his father's house; "for" says he, "I have five brothers, to testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." Now we all know the effect of severe pain to eat out all the kindlier sympathies, and Dives is represented as himself "tormented in flame," and a drop of water denied him; yet even in that his utmost need he utters a sentiment of the highest moral sublimity.—If, then, not yet lost to love and goodness, how could he be lost to hope? Here is a grand difficulty, and how shall we solve it? By a recourse to Purgatory? No: for that doctrine is totally unsupported by scriptural evidence.

While, however, we refuse all sympathy in the case of the fallen, whence is it that we also seem to disdain the assistance, and to reject the prayers of that more numerous division of the heavenly host, who still retain their primal allegiance to the Author of their being. To address to them our prayers would be wrong.

It would be an unwarrantable intrusion into the world unseen, for we know not that they can hear us;—still we may exult in a general confidence that their special services are evermore employed in our behalf. To refuse this consolatory persuasion is an undoubted error, and originated in modern times, and in an unsound feeling—in that fever of jealousy at whatever Rome hath loved or cherished, which disgraced the early Reformation, and which in its senseless rage could not even spare the sacred vestments which that Church wore in the time of the Cæsars, and which were formed, like those of Aaron, ‘for Glory and for Beauty.’ And even in surveying the ritual of the English Church, will not the imaginative and devout, amidst all their thankfulness that so much has been retained, yet feel themselves constrained to avow ‘desideravere aliquid oculi nostri?’

Whatever the Catholics admit, we seem at all hazards resolved to reject. They seem to rule us by contraries.

In the political world we often see that personal antipathy produces such a result. But surely the region of religion ought to be sacred from the invasion of a principle so worldly. Our excessive dread of superstition is of itself a baneful superstition.

It is to far other thoughts that we are trained in that perfect model of all prayer—“Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” We are there encouraged to the contemplation and to the imitation of the blessed angels. Yet some think it forbidden ground. It was not always thought so. Our elder divines were not of that opinion. We appeal from the wisdom or the fashion of a day, and that fashion arising from senseless and o'erwrought fears to a better time—to the spirit of the grey fathers

of the English church.—We refer, in witness of this spirit, and as the best recommendation of our own views, to the noble collect appointed for Saint Michael's day.—“ O everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order—mercifully grant, that as thy holy angels alway do Thee service in heaven, so, by Thy appointment, they may succour and defend us on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.”

Let us first state, in a loose and general form, the ideas which most prevail as to the angelic nature. In popular imagination their bodily presence is nearly human, but here the resemblance between us and them almost ends. Their spirits are usually conceived as acting by a pure and unerring impulse, to whom what duty requires is never subject to uncertainty,

never rebelled against by the will, and never counteracted in operation. Their happiness is, moreover, conceived as always at the full, an unbounded never-failing stream of felicity.

How utterly different is all this from our conception of man! True it is, that the principles of the moral law are in themselves never uncertain, but are firmer than the pillars of heaven, for their “seat is in the bosom of God, their voice is the harmony of the world,” they are the one unchangeable code of action and of thought for all intelligences wheresoever found, in the bright centre or on the dim confines of the universe, from the meanest denizen of earth to the swiftest seraph. But it is also true, that cases of practical difficulty continually present themselves, in which opposite duties are confronted, and to the satisfactory adjustment of which the best powers of the intellect,

and the most upright and decided will are imperatively required. Here, then, is the trial and the test of man.

And why not too of all higher beings? Yet we do not so conceive of them. It is our vain fancy that *their* course of action is always clear, that all *their* resolves are immediate and unhesitating, and never preceded by doubt or deliberation. It is like a child who, looking from a gloomy station on some distant hills which are gay and glittering in sunshine, fancies that *they* are the sure abode of joy and pleasure. We picture the upper regions as always existing in a blaze of light, in a cloudless and eternal noon, and we transfer this idea (whether erroneous or not) of their physical condition to their moral state, and imagine that the inhabitants of that pure clime discern all objects of the latter kind with an equal clearness.

But if the case were so, on what could their

exalted reason be employed, where every thing is plain, and nothing waits for a solution? Some will say the wonders and variety of the material creation are quite inexhaustible, and these may furnish unending mental occupation. But the mysteries of the physical world are the lowest of mysteries, and can only satisfy a fragment of the mind. We pity the shrivelled and stunted nature to whom they could ever supply the only or even the principal aliment. It is not in forming or directing the blind unconscious elements, admirable as they are, and surpassing as is the beauty of their operation, but in creating and controlling the movements of an universe of free spirits, that the glory of our Maker is most displayed.

And here let us notice the strange delusion of those who think that physical researches present the most serious and dignified of all human pursuits, and who almost disdain, as an

inferior thing, the occupation of the Novelist or Poet. Yet do not these latter handle subjects of all others the *most* serious—the *most* agitating and momentous? Do they not traverse, with a nobler gait than belongs to ordinary humanity, the whole stage of our earthly existence? Do they not awaken pity or inspire terror? Do they not pourtray with equal fidelity the bliss of assured love, and the pangs of unrequited affection? Do they not add a new horror to guilt, while they describe virtue in her full fascination? And are not all these things, not remotely, but at once connected with man's ultimate responsibility? And if so, are there any themes higher than these, or more deserving a lofty appreciation?

It is the *mere* man of science, who, notwithstanding the severe attention which his researches demand, may most truly be denounced as empty and frivolous, while he ' seeks the

living among the dead,' and values the tabernacle more than the indwelling spirit, and resembles those 'fools and blind' of old, who knew not whether was greater the gold of the temple, or the temple that sanctified the gold.

It is certain, then, that it is not in dead matter, but in unravelling the perplexities of the moral world, (for wherever there are free-reasoning agents there must be contentions and difficulties and entanglements) that the spirits of the upper universe find their principal and congenial occupation; and these difficulties which naturally be of the most varied description. We cannot doubt that each separate world has its distinct moral history. Each star, each planet will have its own complications. We know how vast are the differences between the several members of the Solar System in their external condition, and measureably so in point of light and heat; can we believe that

their spiritual relations are not equally variegated ?

Or, to go no farther than our own earth—what a rich diversity of interests is presented in the family of European nations ! How individualised is the character of each member of that great confederation ! How delightful is the study of these varieties impressed on all which they do, even when following a common object, and how fertilising to the human mind !

We cannot deny that it is the very property we speak of which is the ever recurring cause of alienation and dispute, but when all is done, the 'joys of conquest are the joys of man,' and we believe too that in a sense substantially the same, they are also the joys of the celestial dwellers. Let none misunderstand us. We speak not of mere contests of force, for :—

" Peace has her victories
Not less renowned than war."

but of the joy of surmounting difficulties in whatever shape presented.

It is a most shallow supposition that a field for the display of these high qualities can ever be wanting, wherever intelligences are found : for freedom of will is the property of all spiritual existences.

Now these views, however incontrovertible, are quite at issue with the sentiments generally imbibed on the nature of the angelic life. We seem to dread an admixture of earthly elements even in our vague meditations on this subject. We assign to them a state of insipid monotony, imagine them animated with but one train of interests—conceive them as all sharing the same undisputed views, and enjoying a happiness constantly maintained at the same level, tranquil and unexcited. And when reminded that a state so passionless can have slight attraction indeed for beings like ourselves, our

usual reply is (and surely a most unsatisfactory and insufficient one) that we shall then by a mysterious change be able to relish that which we admit to our present views would be cloying and insipid. But how a physical change, for death is no more, can produce a violent and total alteration of all our moral ideas, and even of our conception of happiness is more than we can understand.

Equally baseless with the view which we have been combating is that other fancy, that the bliss of the angels is maintained at one even flow, ever full and unvarying. For if so, at least according to our earthly apprehensions, the feeling of satiety could not fail to steal in, and to cloy the guests even of the celestial banquet. Besides the confutation of this opinion follows at once as a corollary from the more expanded views which we have sought to enforce. Wherever high interests are in-

volved and imperilled, wherever mighty destinies are hung in counterpoise, there of necessity must high emotions be generated—the flush of hope—the joy of victory—the agony of disappointment.

The very name of one, at least, of the angelic orders (for Heaven, be it remembered, is no democracy) might teach us that natures though celestial may yet be impassioned ; for the word Seraphim, being interpreted, is the *Ardours* of Heaven.

We have as yet only argued for the existence of all the more vehement affections of the soul, in this elevated class of creation, with, of course, their counterpart objects, but we might plead the cause much higher, and say, that they must *there* reach an intensity which is *here* inconceivable. For this corruptible body sets a bar to all extravagant emotions.

And this remark applies not only to the

indulgence of those malign sentiments which are proverbially so adverse to health, which poison the springs of life, while they embitter and defile the spirit, but even to the state of joy. Too full a tide of happiness would burst the weak ramparts of the flesh, almost sooner than an intolerable grief. It is our doom here to have only moderate satisfactions ; we are forbidden ecstacies. Our organs, though wondrously endowed are still too weak for any passion of the soul that would lead to them. We are obliged to *break*, not only bad news, but even good. A too sudden access of even the best intelligence has often proved fatal.

The Greek poet died of over-joy at receiving the award of the tragic crown. And a case recently came before the coroner of Middlesex, where a young man, before in deep poverty, on hearing that he had been bequeathed a fortune of two hundred thousand pounds, passed into a

state of such frenzied excitement as to commit suicide. To our frail members too high a transport is not less a fearful thing than the tossings of despair. And many are the instances where a too-long delayed, yet anxiously awaited, marriage has but led to a speedy and eternal parting. “ And many brides have died under the hands of paranymphs and maidens dressing them for uneasy joy, the new and undiscerned chains of marriage, according to the saying of Bensirach, the wise Jew:—“ The bride went into her chamber, and knew not what should befall her there.”

Our nature is not born even for an over-measure of felicity. It is not only envy or rage which inflames the blood and which rots the bones, but the fever of love or desire induces a much quicker dissolution.

Who has not heard of the Maid of France, (it is a story related by Monsieur Pinel, in his

work on Insanity, and well authenticated,) who, filled with an excess of admiration, mingled with desire, at the preternatural beauty of the statue of the young god, actually wasted to a shadow while gazing on it, and died, gazing her soul away. Or as that affecting tale is so well told in the Apollo Belvidere of Milman :—

“ Yet on that form in wild delirious trance,
 With more than reverence gazed the Maid of France.
 Day after day the love-sick dreamer stood
 With him alone, nor thought it solitude.
 To cherish grief, her last, her dearest care,
 Her one fond hope, to perish of despair.
 Oft as the shifting light her sight beguiled,
 Blushing she shrank, and thought the marble smiled.
 Oft breathless listening heard, or seemed to hear,
 A voice of music melt upon her ear.
 Slowly she waned, and cold and senseless grown,
 Closed her dim eyes, herself benumbed to stone.
 Yet love in death a sickly strength supplied,
 Once more she gazed, then feebly smiled, and died.”

How strict, then, is the limitation, and how soon arrived at, which our organic weakness prescribes to the violence of our emotions, and

those not of one but of every order. So that we may take up a quite opposite ground to that which is generally held, and instead of viewing the passions as earthly, and incompatible with a purer existence, we see that it is precisely our earthly structure which coerces and restrains that vigour and velocity which to them would be more natural. We have, therefore, a right to expect in the next life, not a diminution, but an enhancement of feeling. We are here annoyed by a continual sense of restraint, but there we shall be able to feel unboundedly, and to take our fill of emotion.

We have, doubtless, taken for granted in the above remarks that the celestial body offers no obstacle to the operations of spirit, but is, on the contrary, its supple instrument, and efficient minister. We apprehend that none will be found in these days to revive the ancient Manichean doctrine, if it be not one which even

now pervades the East, that matter is essentially malignant, and that perfect freedom or purity of mind is inconsistent with it.

And yet it appears to us that there must be some such lurking idea in the creed of the generality of Christians, for they seem to nullify their profession of belief in the resurrection of the body, twice repeated every Sabbath-day in the service of our national church, by the airy and unsubstantial shape which the future life assumes in their imaginations. And let us remember that it is not Reason but Imagination which is the prime mover in religion, by exciting our sensibilities, and kindling devotion.

It is from inattention to this fact that our chief mistakes proceed. It is from a full knowledge of it, and from carrying out the principle firmly, *though much too far*, that the Romish church has obtained so vast a sway,

and so extended a reception. In this she has shewn a rare acquaintance with human nature, and therefore has acquired a mastery over it. And, among other instances of her “so potent art,” we may well select that of Angelic power and guardianship. In calling to her aid this doctrine, and arraying it in its most engaging form; and even enthroning in the heavens, in the person of the Virgin, a sweeter and gentler influence, she has employed resources of a most seductive kind.

It will be our duty hereafter to inquire to what extent this argument may be lawfully carried, and how far this soothing persuasion may be admitted. But let us remember, that the mere logician is the worst and weakest of theological disputants, and that the pleadings of the heart also are entitled to be heard, and have “*their* claims allowed.”

And who, let us ask, is inclined to sneer at

or disallow them? None but the cold and the dry, the unimaginative and prosaic, the dealers in syllogisms and formulas, the supporters of a cramped and pedantic theology, and these, though numerous, are (thank heaven!) among the least effective of human agents. A certain party of this description may, like a corresponding one during the latter period of Judaism, appear considerable for a time, or in a particular country, and that partly for extraneous or political reasons, but take the whole range of Christendom, and they are insignificant indeed. Insignificant they always have been in regard to learning or talent. For it is not the reading ephemeral tracts which will make a man learned, neither is it the wearisome repetition of a cut and dried phraseology which will entitle us to call him eloquent, nor is it the denouncing human nature in terms of unqualified reprobation, instead of reverencing it amid

all its wanderings as still the workmanship of God, which discovers either a man's acquaintance with or his superiority to its frailties. We are rather disposed to say (at least those who have too much sense to take such an one at his own valuation) that while having his full share of the infirmities of the nature which he abhors, he adds thereto the greatest of all wants, the most grievous of all faults, the want of that “most excellent gift of charity, without which we are counted dead in the sight of God, and all our doings are nothing worth. That charity which is the bond of peace,” the crown and consummation of all virtues.

And here let us be bold enough to say that we would not exchange this little Collect, some of whose golden words we have quoted, for the longest volume that ever proceeded from that barren school. Religious imposture, at least among ourselves, is the last kind to be detected,

and where we see Gravity we infer Saintship. But gravity was not always reckoned so sure a sign of goodness, nor did it always enjoy so high a reputation even among philosophers and heroes, or saints and sages.

Thus Chrysostom, the Golden Mouth of Christianity, and in the face of a corrupt court and a licentious city, its high and magnanimous Confessor; who cheerfully left the seat of empire and of his metropolitan sway for a cheerless exile on the remotest shores of the Black Sea (like the elegant and voluptuous Ovid, though, happily with far other thoughts and nobler consolations, banished from the refinements of Rome, and the smiles of the Cæsarean majesty, to weep, a pining outcast, in the savage solitude of the same region) yet of this great prelate we find it recorded that, while at Constantinople, he seldom retired to rest without having Aristophanes under his pillow, in

order to secure an hour of mirth at night, and an hour of mirth in the morning.

Thus too the father of Sir Philip Sydney, in a letter to his son, tells him, that he would greatly degenerate from his sires if he could not intermingle gaiety with seriousness, and that he would find himself most apt for great undertakings by so doing ; and his gallant and accomplished son, we well know, did not so degenerate.

And Shakspere was the favourite closet companion of Charles the First, our kingly saint, our royal martyr. And though scurilously assailed on this head by the hateful Puritans, we do not find that he was reproved by his faithful and enlightened chaplains, by Taylor, or Juxon, or Hammond. When he was Prince of Wales he said that he loved to hear Sir Edward Coke address the Commons, he “ so mingled mirth and gravity together.”

Now Coke, at this time, was well-stricken in years. But these men knew how to be both merry and wise ; and thought it no proof of piety to emasculate their nature, or deny its tendencies.

Thus, too, Locke gave to unchanging seriousness a hard name, saying, that it was “ a mysterious carriage of the body to conceal the defects of the mind.”

And Plato, the master of ancient wisdom, while laughing with a circle of friends on some topic of the day, seeing some one approach them of no extraordinary powers of understanding, suddenly checked himself and said “ Hush, my friends, look grave now, for I see a fool coming.” But all are not equally hardy ; and, in reference to the religious party above alluded to, few indeed have strength of nerve sufficient to question claims which are so loftily insisted on, and a piety which is so ostentatiously pro-

truded. And what a profanation is it to a high and holy subject to be constantly borne upon the lip, and discoursed of to promiscuous assemblages, instead of being concealed in the heart, and only occasionally disclosed! How different from that sacred modesty and reserve which is natural to all true and profound emotions. Or as it is so well expressed in those lines of exquisite beauty.

*Se sub serenis vultibus
Austera Virtus occulit,
Timens videri, ne suum
Dum prodit, amittat decus.*

Those of whom we speak are they who, while they depress humanity, yet contrive to exalt themselves. But quite other is the estimate which has been formed of it by Him who knoweth all things; for, amid all its errors, and far gone as it is from original righteousness,

it is still said, that “He *so* loved the world,” as to send His Son to redeem it. Now neither man nor God can love what is altogether unlovely.

But in so representing it, they do but follow their own impulses, the impulses of a stinted generosity and unwilling sympathy. Or, as one has well said, (one who is a master of fiction because he is a master of the heart) in a tale of thrilling interest though constructed out of most unpromising materials—the fortunes of an outcast Parish Boy; these men, we say, “invariably and instinctively turn their eyes from the darkest side of earth to the darkest quarter of the heavens.”

The spiritual domination of the divines of this school has been found even oppressive, and, at one time, threatened to become a despotism, and to root out all sober religion in the land, and all sound learning. But their ascendancy

is beginning to fail, their sentiments are less generally acquiesced in. Another standard has been raised, and numerous votaries are already enlisted under it. We hope for the time to come to see fewer of those who with the principles of Nonconformists enjoy all the comforts of an Establishment. And some of the honours too, though happily not the highest.

A new banner has been unfolded, and numbers hasten to welcome back those ancient principles once departed. It has been unfolded in a quarter to which men are accustomed to look with respect, one of those two “golden urns” whence in this country we “draw our light.” The productions which have issued from these men are not infallible, neither do they claim to be. They may have some frivolous, and weak-minded, and injudicious followers, but what party is without them? Some of them may have been guilty of eccentricities,

but they were the eccentricities of a stricter devotion, of secret and real abstinence and mortification, and of a more conscientious adherence to the rules of their church. They were not the silly fulminations of the platform, nor the loudly applauded piety of the committee-room. We will not cover them with indiscriminate panegyric, nor would we subscribe all their positions; but still we thankfully acknowledge, and we are sure every true Churchman will concur with us in saying, that they have revived principles of the highest value.

We have been led into these remarks from a consideration of the different manner in which the theological parties in question would receive the doctrine of Angelic influence. But on this, as on nearly every other subject within the range of religious controversy, not only are their positions different, but their whole tone

of feeling is contrasted. And this not in religion only, but also in literature and the arts. The two systems, as Mr. Newman correctly informs us, are not DIVERGENT, they are CONTRARY.* We have sufficiently indicated *our* preference, and the to which we incline.

We would fain corroborate our views on the topic now in hand by a reference to some well-known authors, in whose writings we always find the purest gratification, and on whose opinion though not that of professional divines we set the highest value, arising from our admiration of their refined natures and exalted sensibilities. Thus Sir Thomas Browne says in the work before referred to:—"I consider the belief in Guardian Angels of great use and excellent advantage in the conduct of a man's life."

And Washington Irving thus speaks in his

* See Fronde's *Remains*—Second Series.

beautiful chapter on Saint Mark's Eve:—" It is a sublime and beautiful doctrine, inculcated by the early fathers, that there are guardian angels appointed to watch over cities and nations; to take care of the welfare of good men, and to guard and guide the steps of helpless infancy. Nothing, says Saint Jerome, gives us a greater idea of the dignity of our soul than that God has given each of us, at the moment of our birth, an angel to have charge of it. What could be more consoling than the idea that affectionate and guardian spirits were permitted to watch over our welfare, and when we sleep to keep a vigil over our most helpless hours? A belief of this kind would, I should think, be a new incentive to virtue, rendering us circumspect even in our most secret moments, from the idea that there are invisible witnesses of all our actions. It would take away, too, from that loneliness and

destitution which we are apt to feel." He also expresses his belief that departed spirits are permitted to return, and they may yet "smile unseen around us."

And, in this opinion, Bishop Heber fully coincided, as may be seen from a letter in his Indian Journal, and as might be expected from his sprightly fancy and affectionate nature. And to come to one in whom we recognise the same qualities, with a much larger measure of poetical endowment, and the extensive popularity and unceasing demand for whose principal work is about the most promising token of the literary taste and cultivation of the age, as shewing that bad principles and a wild and tumultuous whirl of words are no longer considered essential to inspiration, and that the still, though more potent, voice of the serener sentiments will not be unheeded—the Author of the *Christian Year*, we say, (that

worthy and most congenial companion to our Common Prayer) fully assents to these views.

In speaking of that unhappy state of soul in which the sinner is obliged to hear the tales which memory tells unsought of past transgressions, and finds the sad remembrance come between him and all true enjoyment, and under that hateful spell, flies self-reproaching from the home and heart he dearest loves to the shore of ocean, or to the depths of some silent forest, in the hope that there he may securely hide his grief, and no eye be there to see, and no ear to listen, but :—

“ In vain the averted cheek, in loneliest dell,
 Is conscious of a gaze it cannot bear ;
 The leaves that rustle near us seem to tell
 Our heart’s sad secret to the silent air.

Nor is the dream untrue ; for all around
 The heavens are watching with their thousand eyes ;
 We cannot pass our guardian angel’s bound—
 Resigned or sullen he will hear our sighs.

He in the mazes of the budding wood is nigh,
 And mourns to see our thankless glance ;
 Dwell coldly, where the fresh green earth is strewed,
 With the first flowers that lead the vernal dance.

In wasteful bounty showered, they smile unseen,
 Unseen by man—but what if purer sprights
 By moonlight o'er their dewy bosoms lean,
 To adore the Father of all gentle Lights.”

And alluding to one who may have been taught that the shades of the departed revisit this earth, and still interest themselves in the fortunes of the living, and exert a real superintendence over their welfare, he would not discourage that affectionate creed, but would rather enforce it.

“ If thou hast loved in hours of gloom
 To dream the dead are near,
 And people all the lonely room
 With guardian spirits dear—
 Dream on the soothing dream at will.”

And in some exquisite lines in the Lyra

Apostolica, which we can scarcely hesitate to assign to the same hand, the Voice of a Spirit is represented as speaking with much the same sympathies and emotions as it experienced on earth, but with much enlarged powers, even to the penetration of secrets before inscrutable. And this we perceive from the two concluding lines—

“ I still am near,
Watching the smiles I prized on earth,
Your converse mild, your blameless mirth.

Now too I hear,
Of whispered sounds the tale complete,
Low prayers and musings sweet.”

We ask no pardon of the reader for introducing these extracts, for it is a luxury to write or to read them. But with these high recommendations we will close our chapter, and devote ourselves in the next to a careful consideration of what Scripture may unfold on the subject.

CHAPTER V.

Are they not all ministering spirits ?

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

And the Lord said unto Satan, from whence comest thou ? and Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

BOOK OF JOB.

BEFORE we open the Sacred Volume, it may be well to fortify ourselves against the cavils of the uncharitable, and of those (alas ! too numerous !) who resent any deviation from, or advance *beyond* their own peculiar tenets, almost as if it were an injury done to themselves, seeing that they are the Guardians, albeit self-constituted, of the faith.

And although their eagerness to undertake this office, and their presumption in discharging its duties, is ever in exact proportion to their ignorance and incapability, and to the lowness of their intellectual position, yet on this side they are quite impregnable, inasmuch as to all such disparaging remarks they have the rich and ready rejoinder that “spiritual things must be spiritually discerned,—” which at one blow and without the need of another observation *includes* themselves and *excludes* their opponents.

It may be well, then, to state that if in the ensuing pages we advance somewhat beyond the usual positions held on this subject—if we extend the frontiers of thought, it is in the way of *conjecture* or speculation, and not of *opinion*.

Nor is this an illusory distinction. We admit that practically to the majority of minds

it will be so, in spite of the clear abstract difference. For we believe that most minds are so constituted that they must either cease to think upon a subject, or else must hold a definite opinion upon it. They are impatient of all suspense, and if they come to entertain a question at all, feel themselves necessitated to form a fixed belief. But this is a manifest defect, and is the besetting sin of ordinary understandings. It is the mark of superior faculties to give reception to many thoughts as probable surmises, but where clear evidence is wanting to refuse to admit them *farther*, or to suffer them to be established in the mind as *opinions*. But though never received in the light of direct convictions, they may still do inestimable service, if recognised only as so many glorious possibilities. Now all will at once confess that there is here an immense theoretical difference, yet we find that few can realise it practically.

The power of suffering the mind to rest in equilibrio is most rare. Between having no thought upon a subject, and entertaining a decided opinion upon it, there is with the generality of minds scarcely a medium. Now though an idea may never be harboured on any more intimate footing than as a *conjecture*, it may still even in that subordinate light be well qualified to enrich the imagination and to fertilize the intellect.

But, knowing how evanescent are all impressions unless illustrated, we will give an instance or two :—That the heavenly bodies are all inhabited is so vastly probable that we are entitled firmly to hold it as a fixed opinion. But that a sexual difference may exist among their inhabitants and throughout all the spheres of the universe, may, after a profound consideration of the nature of the created and finite spirit, and the necessities of all society, and the

constituents of all happiness, to some some minds appear as worthy to be entertained as a *conjecture*.. An idea, such as we may occasionally revert to with pleasure, but which, as all evidence is wanting, we should hold it quite irrational ever to embrace as an *opinion*.

And when we speak of such an idea affording pleasure, it could neither afford that, nor pain, except as connected with another problem, the answer to which in our present stage of existence must ever remain a desideratum. It must ever remain to us almost indifferent, what may be transacted in other spheres, or what varieties of unknown being may exist there, if we of this planet are for ever to remain isolated from all other orbs throughout space, and to be debarred an intercourse with them. We receive from those orbs which are beyond the solar way some slight, and almost imperceptible physical influences

“ the stars give not much light, because they are so high”—all that we know of them is their existence and a faint conception of their distance, but with them and with the members of our own system, even with our fair attendant “ walking in brightness” so near us, we are forbidden all intellectual relations.

Nor let any cavil at our saying that we can form but an imperfect conception of their remoteness, for though in the case of many of them, we can number the miles, yet can we not conceive the distance. True it is, that the disclosures of Astronomy are unspeakably glorious, but the *actual impression* which they make on the human mind has been often, and perhaps usually is, overstated. From the manner in which some speak, their notion appears to be, that the physical measurement of objects is also the exact measure of the degrees of our wonder and admiration:—that the feeling of sublimity produced by objects, precisely cor-

responds with their ascertained magnitude. Hence they speak in language almost approaching to contempt of terrestrial things, and the emotions which they are calculated to convey. But this is their error, and the slightest reference to inward experience will be enough to overthrow it.

Sure we are that he who has ascended Mount Blanc, and sat thereon as on a throne, and

“ Half forgot what world or worldling meant,”

has felt sublimer emotions than he ever before experienced from witnessing the array of the starry heavens.—And we will suppose him to have been an exact student, and to have gone through the circle of the sciences. Now what makes the difference here, and how shall we account for it? The reason is, that in the latter case the distances, magnitudes, and motions are so vast and swift, as to be inconceivable. They are to him a sound, and scarcely more.

Moreover the heavens supply him with no imagery, with no home or resting place for his intellect or affections. They are merely bright points, shining in endless space, without even the knowledge of guilt or sorrow existing there, to raise a shadow or to excite a sensation ; and the natives of those realms, if there are any, are presented to his fancy in all the uneven-tuality of bliss.

But in the former instance it is quite otherwise. For the green earth on which he gazes down is o'er informed with the most stirring incidents. The actual scene is as nothing ; it is what the soul creates or knows, and of which the senses only minister an occasion or supply a hint—it is this which transports and enlarges him. For beneath that white cloud he knows that at this instant the armies of France are descending on the plains of Italy ; the young conqueror at whose name his enemies are

already turning pale, as he seems born to outvie their greatness, and to darken the lustre of their thrones, must now be flushed with hopes more thrilling than those of Hannibal, as he surveys his expected conquest, the land of promise and of renown, lying beneath him in all her dangerous beauty.

And what fierce passions he well knows are at this moment consuming his countrymen. The one part filled with dismay, and perplexed with fear of change, and haunted by sad images of coming defeat, and after that, of utter ruin, and flight, and exile, and the other part eager for the arrival of the delivering host, and ready to welcome it with a boisterous joy.

The senselessness of joy is now sublime ;
The antiquated earth
Beats like the heart of man.

On turning westward, it occurs to him that

there far away murmurs the everlasting voice of ocean, which, as creation's common, might seem sacred to peace ; and which is so mighty that when in its state of uproar it could in an instant overwhelm in its unfathomable depths the united armaments of men, and soon after roll on under smiling heavens, and with a serene surface, as if nothing had disturbed its tranquility ; moreover, he reflects that even now that mysterious main may be the scene of bloody strife and of furious passions, and that the brief struggle may be the parent of permanent and wide-spreading consequences, which may extend to him, even in his humble home, and secure or embitter the remainder of his life.

And when he gazes northward, the thought of England rushes into his heart ; her busy population, her gallant spirit, her wild commotions, her thundering senate. And when his

thoughts at last return inwards, he recurs to his own sublime solitude, and to the awful silence which encircles him. But softer visions shall not be wanting. Tenderer, yet stronger, ties enchain him. If he gazes downward on the Tyrol, he remembers that there dwells the gentle blue-eyed girl whose welfare is to him more than the whole earth beside. The deep seclusion of the natives of that happy vale, their freedom from war's alarms; the song, the dance, and all the revelry of their mountain homes,—these flash before him, and, contrasted with the sterner emotions before excited, well nigh overpower him.

Let us now imagine the same man, surveying, on a winter's night, the starry heavens. Behold, they are all glittering above him, so pure, so high, but oh! how cold! how vacant! Who will dare to compare the sublimity of the two situations? Of our lonely sitter on the

Alps, or of the rapt star-gazer? None will dare to do so, but the *mere* man of Science, the man of lines, and numbers, and surfaces, who may sneer at emotions which he has never felt, and which his sluggish nature cannot comprehend.

The most extensive knowledge of this kind is certainly far from conferring real wisdom or elevation. As witness the case of Laplace, who at the end of his philosophy, refused to believe in final causes; and would not acknowledge that the moon was made to rule the night, or that the eye was made for seeing, or the ear for hearing; and when promoted, in honour of his scientific acquirements, to the superintendence of a public department, Napoleon observed of him that he carried into the great affairs of state, “the spirit of the method of infinitely small quantities.” Yet he was one of the greatest of this class, their pride and boast.

The legitimate honours of science we will

never refuse, but will not dream of comparing them with the transports which fill the breast of the inspired bard. Man was born for something nobler than ascertaining altitudes or calculating velocities. The poetical spirit is the very choicest gift of God, and which most approximates a man to sublimer intelligences. It is the Royalty of human nature. It is the very highest endowment of heaven.

But it is high time to return from this digression. We were led into it, from reflecting on some of those questions which can receive only a conjectural answer. And among these we would include that which forms the subject of the present treatise. We would state then, once for all, that if upon it we at all advance beyond generally received ideas, we would desire it to be understood, that we do so by way of *conjecture*, and not of *opinion*. We are persuaded that none but the narrowest and sourest

bigot will object to so modest an exercise of the powers of thought.

We have said, that, to some minds, it may appear not improbable that Sex may be a distinction commensurate with the intelligent creation, grounding their surmise on reasonings of universal application. But, be this as it may, it appears to us, after considering the various offices and functions assigned to the angels in Scripture, that this difference obtains among *them*. We are quite aware that some will consider this a dishonouring thought. It is not so. Let the dishonour and the shame rest with those whose ideas on this subject are so inextricably involved in animal considerations, that they deem it (as some purists have done marriage,) unbefitting the holiest place ! But even our present experience would be enough to confute them, for is it hard to imagine that those beings, so high exalted, may appear to each other in the same sacred light in which

already appear to us the persons of Mother—Sister — Daughter, and unapproachable like them save with absolute purity.—And when we consider that among the angels is neither marriage nor its consequences, and, of course, not the appetites which lead to it, then may we conceive of Sex as existing among them in its purest ideal, the parent of every delicious and tender emotion, unstained even by the shadow of mortal passion. We may conceive that there, as here, the lovelier spirit may wear a form of frailer texture, and plumage of more brilliant and varied colouring, and that the stronger spirit may have a stouter frame, and a more majestic tread ; and that the one may exhibit a sprightlier and the other a more serious turn of general thought, without in the slightest degree trenching upon that entire sacredness which ought to hallow our every idea of them.

There are three bodily desires in man—hun-

ger—thirst, and lust ; and these three we call Appetites ; now these appetites are the mere attributes of a corruptible body, and, as Cole-ridge truly says in his Table Talk '*they are no part of ourselves—*' And if they ever rise, as they sometimes do among the most degraded of our race, to be the foremost ideas in our consideration of human nature, it is by a foul usurpation and most unnatural ascendancy. The fate of all of them is the same. They all necessarily end in death. They were intended to preserve and multiply life upon earth, and with the dissolution of the mortal body (of which they were the unavoidable consequence) they too expire. It would be as irrational to suppose the third of these appetites surviving death, as it would be the other two.

And even that one, in regard to which we are naturally most sensitive, has been effectually resisted, and its importunity denied by all the

wise and good, even among the heathens and where we should least expect it, by youthful captains and conquerors :—

“ Remember that Pellean Conqueror
A *youth*, — how all the beauties of the east,
He slightly viewed, and slightly overpass'd,—
How he, surnamed of Africa, dismissed,
In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid—”

While of the total subjugation of this frailty by every true Christian, assisted as he is by mightier aids, it is unnecessary that we should speak. But if this desire may, by a proper discipline, be ‘kept under’ during life, at death it is utterly extinguished. It can no more belong to the glorified body, than hunger and thirst, the constantly recurring calls of which in our present frame imply its decay and eventual dissolution. But *over the mental characteristics of each Sex death can have no power.*

Our opinion, then, that this difference may

exist, (as it necessarily must, if it exist in the upper world at all,) divorced from every idea of impurity is strictly rational and philosophic, for :—

“ We *now* are born of clay,
But *then* of beams
More bright than those of day,
On Eden’s streamis.”

What, however, are those functions assigned in Holy Writ to the angels, and which seem to imply a division of nature? Let us compare some passages. In the third chapter of Genesis it is said, “ The Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” We see what a task of

fearful severity is here assigned to some members of the heavenly host.

Let us now contrast with it an occupation of a far different kind, likewise attributed to them. Speaking of children, our Saviour says, “I say unto you *their* angels do alway behold the face of your Father which is in heaven.” Here is a duty which they are said to discharge of the very sweetest and most engaging description, namely, to guard the slumbers of infancy, to protect its feebleness, and to watch over the innocence of that tender age. And this is a function which seems to require constant observation and minute care.

We have brought these two passages into juxtaposition, in order that the reader may notice how very dissimilar and uncongenial are these occupations, though equally assigned to angels—and how they evidently require for their performance, opposite, if not incompa-

tible, moods of mind and temperament. Can it be believed that they could both be executed by the same beings? Do not these offices imply a profound difference of nature and of general sentiment in those who discharge them? Is it not, in short, such a difference as Sex might be supposed to account for?

In answering these questions the safest ground on which we can proceed is that of analogy. The slightest glance at human life shews us that, among ourselves at least, employments so alien could never be united. And this is so evident that it would be tedious to illustrate it. Now among creatures of a higher order the laws of thought are not reversed, nor can we conceive of them, any more than of ourselves, as passing from a given state of mind to an opposite one with a shocking abruptness which is here unknown, and would be monstrous. But it will be said

that this is an extreme case which need not be imagined. Perhaps so. But neither is it conceivable, whatever distance of time may be supposed to intervene, that a temper of mind and heart well qualified to execute deeds of wrath and fiery indignation should also fittingly and congenially be sent on errands of pity and tenderness. For a master principle governs every character, and he who is best to command and overawe, is not also the best to soothe and comfort.

Let us take a nearer view of the instances in question.—It must surely have required agents of a very different order to superintend the expulsion of our first parents from Eden the pleasant Paradise of God, and to fulfil a mission of love and gentleness. Nor would it be enough to allege that it was only executing a sentence of most righteous condemnation. The error which they had committed, as far as may be

inferred from the deep obscurity of the whole narrative, was one of frailty, not of malice, an act, not of cruelty to others, but arising from a want of self-restraint over themselves. Now to be the officer of punishment, however deserved, must be distasteful and repugnant to all finer sensibilities. Just and necessary as are the decrees of justice, yet coarse and stern are the features of mind which seem most called for in the task of enforcing them.

And, surely they, to whom it was given on this occasion to 'wield the brandished sword of God,' and to hasten our lingering parents out of the borders of their last Eden, and whose terrifying gaze they met, as, looking back, they beheld the gate—

“With dreadful faces thronged, and fiery arms—”

could not have been beings of a kindred mould

with those, who bear especial favour to children, and love the innocent brightness of their countenances, who haunt them night and day, and inspire even new-born babes with those “mysterious and undiscerned phantasms which cause a crysome child to smile.”

We will select several other instances to illustrate the nature of these celestial agents, and to establish our position: but, ere we do so, it will be necessary to interpose some observations.

CHAPTER VI.

“ Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep.”

MILTON.

We are aware that a wide difference exists among theologians as to what shall be admitted to be cases of angelic ministration. Some would apply a much more rigid rule of interpretation than others. The German divines are remarkable for their laxity in this respect, and by the extreme liberty which they exercise even in explaining the oracles of God, they have

caused a counter-feeling in other countries, and a great alarm at their presumptuous innovations.

But when was such alarm the parent of wise counsels? And has not the fear of that spirit of intrepid and boundless speculation almost spell-bound the faculties of authors of our own nation, and imparted an air of slavery and restraint even to their best thoughts?

Besides, when actuated by this fear, they have commonly been guilty of the greatest injustice to whoever may have differed from them, and have confounded things which it is of the last consequence to keep separate. To question an historical fact is with them as bad as to deny a moral principle. But a man may surely question many historical facts though generally received, and yet preserve all his moral principles untainted, and in full vigour of action.

If his doubts should proceed beyond a certain point, and he should be led to question any of the main events on which our Faith is founded, we should cease to defend him, conceiving that the same cloud which obscures his intellect would involve in mist his moral perceptions. But many subordinate facts will be differently viewed by men whose convictions on every necessary point are equally decided, while the column of Christian evidence remains the while in all its original strength and majesty.

The argument by which this severity of judgment, and bitter denunciation of the slightest departure from the ordinary path, is sought to be defended, has usually been, that it is not the single position in question which might not with safety be relinquished, but that a relaxation on that head would soon lead to a dilapidation of the entire Christian edifice.

Hence a point essential, and a point nonessential, are defended with equal ardour and obstinacy; a mere transaction of time and a point of the eternal law of Duty which is for all times and for all systems, are held equally sacred.

To discover grounds for excluding others from the pale of orthodoxy is ever a delicious thing to the narrow-hearted religionist, as it so much enhances the merit of his own Confession. It is, however, consoling to reflect, that while he vainly dreams that by such rigidity he is multiplying the assurances of his own salvation, he is in truth only forfeiting thereby his title to that kingdom of love, "which except a man will receive it as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein."

These thoughts are naturally suggested by a consideration of the different extent to which the interposition of angels is admitted by dif-

ferent writers. While, however, we deprecate every exhibition of a temper so close and uncharitable, let us state that we ourselves are quite unconcerned in the issue. Our defence is perfectly gratuitous. For ourselves we possess a wider creed than would be palatable to those who usurp the name of the religious world. We except the Thirty nine Articles, and much that is beyond them. With our favourite Browne 'the beloved physician' we do not find in them scope enough for an active faith. And specially do we desire an enlargement on the subject of our intercourse with the invisible world—yet not an enlargement of the letter, but, the giving more liberty to the inward thoughts. —

Let us now resume our consideration of some more scriptures, merely premising that whatever conjectures we may form as to the nature and employments of angels, we shall transfer

in their full force to the futurity of our own race, conceiving ourselves empowered to do so by the tenour of the passage in the twentieth of Luke.

In the nineteenth chapter of the second book of Kings we read—"And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred four score and five thousand : and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses."

Now, what a stern deed is here related ! And how incompatible, at least with a *predominance* of the gentler affections in the terrific agent. It is indeed probable that the angel was not here displayed doing *visibly* the work of destruction, but that by a mysterious command over the powers of nature he impregnated with death the air breathed by that mighty host. He might have caused them to

inhale piosonous or sulphurous exhalations, or added strength to the fiery blast of the Simoom. But in either case the interference was equally real, and though it may have been screened from sight was not less tremendous. Now the author of this frightful havoc may have been possessed of inflexible justice and uprightness, but can we persuade ourselves that it would be possible to *love* him? For if it drew tears from the youthful Xerxes, as he surveyed his fine army on the shores of the Hellespont before crossing over into Greece, to reflect that gay and glittering as they were then, not one of them would be alive that day one hundred years; and if we feel that such sentiments became him, then in what light can we regard the *conscious wilful* agent of a desolation vaster in amount, and instantaneous in effect? What mould must he have been made of, who could see that gallant host, every heart throbbing

with high emotion and joyful anticipation, and could yet wave that magic wand, or give those secret orders, which, ere the next sun dawned, would strew them around, all cold and stiff and still?

Nor let it be urged in answer to this, that this was still a good angel. He might have been so. But this instance may serve to teach us that we ought to enlarge our ideas of the angelic community, and cease to consider it as all animated by one impulse, but rather as composed of individuals of the most various and almost opposite powers and dispositions, beings glorious but imperfect, and in that very imperfection, and consequent need of mutual assistance and sympathy, finding the surest bond of cordiality and love.

It is well for any community to have in its bosom those who, if occasion should arise, are both inclined and qualified to do deeds of might

and fearful energy, but it were ill for that society, and ruinous to its peace and harmony, if all its members were of the same impetuous tendency.

Let us, however, cite some instances of another description, and bring the passages into contact and comparison. At the end of the account of the Temptation it is said, “Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold! angels came and ministered unto him.”

Now here was a gracious ministration, a duty of comfort and soothing, which could scarcely have been confided to hands such as those which executed the vengeful Act we have just examined; a destroyer could hardly fulfil the mission of “a Son of Consolation.” It would shock all our ideas of proportion to suppose it. The forlorn and famished Son of God, alone in the desert, after his nature had been convulsed to its centre by such high contending emotions, and before his solemn agony

had yet quite faded from him, required surely the tenderest comforters, and angels of the softest wing.

For the personal experience of each one must be enough to assure him, that, in an hour of sorrow, the very same views and arguments, when urged by different persons, have a most unequal effect. The lessons of wisdom may fail of their due effect when addressed to us by one to whom we are indifferent, or whose character is uncongenial, while we may gather hope and reassurance from the same counsels when uttered in the persuasive tones of her, in whose goodness and affection we feel confidence. Doubly powerful to all purposes of consolation are the words of hope, when breathed from the lips of love.

Now, judging from all analogy, (the application of which, in this latter instance, is very striking and need not be pointed out,) and from

a consideration of these so various offices, may we not recur with some confidence to our conjecture that a difference of Sex may pervade the celestial world, as well as our own ?

There is yet another inference which may be drawn from the example in question, that they who were so powerful to administer comfort in the case of another, could hardly be without the taste and experience of sorrow in their own. For if sorrow were a word utterly unmeaning as applied to angelic life, having never had a place there, how could angels be fitted to sympathise or console ?

Yet such is the vague, and we may add the senseless idea which prevails, that not a shade ever crosses the eternal brightness of their state, that grief to them is a phrase, and nothing more. But we know that both sin and sorrow have found an entrance even among themselves. For the inspired histories tell

that there has been “war in heaven,” and an extensive and yet unsubdued rebellion. And they who still stand upright can only do so by a continued, and we may say, a *contingent* exercise of faith and fortitude and self-command.

So, then, Sorrow can be no idle word to those who have lost so many companions, and friendships, and loves, such as flesh and blood can never know. Say rather that it is *our* griefs which are shadowy and unsubstantial, and *our* wars and tumults but the faint echoes of those which shake the Empyrean.

Where would virtue be, without trouble, and danger, and excitement? It could not even be *formed*, for virtue is not an endowment, but a *growth*. It could scarcely be more than sensuality.

Where, we may ask, would even love be? For love owes not only much of its delicious-

ness, but much even of the strength of its existence to dangers shared or losses undergone.

Without an occasional taste of affliction we cannot even know how happy we are. For habit is able to blunt our sense of happiness, and that which in its newness was ecstasy at length becomes, like the air we breathe, a thing we could not live without, but yet in which we are rather passively than actively happy. But when pain comes, we are recalled from the forgetfulness engendered by custom, and our sense of subsequent joy is thereby exalted and vivified. And besides all this, a state of unruffled smoothness is coveted by none but the sensual and degraded.

And in corroboration of this view, we would confidently appeal to all the nobler natures, whether it is the high cares—the agitating interests—the serious responsibilities of life

which disgust us with it, and make us desire its termination, or whether it is not much rather the low animal wants which beset us, and the long train of *bodily* ills, which flesh is heir to ? To combine the duties and aspirations of a Spirit with the wants and appetites of an Animal—this is our lot, and herein lies the agony of the conflict. It is this unceasing contention between the two which is so harassing, and which causes life's way-worn pilgrim to exclaim with the souls under the altar, “ How long, O Lord ! how long ? ”

Let us turn to another sphere of occupation assigned to our heavenly guardians.

In the sixteenth chapter of Luke we read :— “ And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.” To the reflective and awakened mind, it will ever be a subject of musing and perhaps of melancholy, what shall befall the

soul on parting from her wayward yet dear companion, and in the first hour of her bereavement. Antecedently to all light shed on this point from Revelation (and which we may thankfully acknowledge that we have in the above passage) we have a full right to expect that the amplest provision and the tenderest care will not fail us in that fearful issue. We may ground our expectation on that point on our general persuasion of the yearning kindness and fatherhood of God, who “knoweth whereof we are made, and remembereth that we are but dust.”

But we have also more special, and perhaps on that account to the majority of minds more unanswerable reasons for this comfortable assurance. We have the experience of the manner of our entrance into the present world. In every instance the young stranger comes not into this world unexpected and unlooked for,

he comes not an unheeded or unbidden guest. For months his arrival has been anticipated, and much joy is there and gladsome welcoming of his coming. But even if it were otherwise, and if we for a moment take the painful supposition of a barbarous exposure, still after a few tears and some weak inarticulate wailings the half-unconscious babe would cease to be. The spirit would be exhaled to warmer regions, and expand its petals under the full ray of more than maternal love. But who can paint the desolation of that spirit which after leaving “the precincts of the cheerful day,” and this green blooming earth, and all its sweet companionships, goes forth into an unknown universe, alone and unattended.

If we sometimes cannot stand on a foreign shore without a sinking of the heart, and a strange sense of loneliness—if we love to carry with us some fond reminiscence of Father-land,

and often gaze wistfully on that quarter of the heavens where it rises proudly above the waters. Or, reverting to that tender passage of Dante, if the hour of twilight melts the heart and fills the eye of the young traveller on the first evening that he ever parted from his friends, committing himself to the hands of strangers and to the mercies of the deep, and the next morning rises on such an one, almost without its freshness, and the sun seems darkened in the sky ;—and we love to hold as long as we may the vessel in our sight, and pitying the exile who wanders over a melancholy waste of waters to a dim and doubtful futurity, we would fain recall him if we could, lamenting that earthly good should be purchased by such a laceration of the heart.

Yet all these are weak and futile instances, these are but faint images of the feelings which must oppress him who, dying, is doomed to a

far greater journey, yet without a companion, or a witness. Can such a state of solitude, then, be credible? Especially in that state of isolation in which the bereaved spirit will then for the first time find itself? Far from us be such a thought—far from us be such unworthy apprehensions!

But is there not a case, painful in whatever light viewed, in which we could almost fancy that such *might* be the case—in which we could almost say, yet without injury or derogation to the Almighty's paternal love, that all guardianship and convoy might be denied? We allude to the case of those who have wrested from Him His prerogative of life and death, and refused to wait in resignation till their great change should come. Now this which has been so often accounted heroism, is only extreme cowardice, and a vile and despicable selfishness. For many are the conjunctures

when life is more terrible than death. To refuse, then, to face the former, is to run away from the battle, in the thickest of the fight—and may we not imagine some liminary angel, appointed to keep watch over the portals into the other world, to sternly demand of such an one, “Friend, how camest thou in hither ?” and then, as he had disturbed the guardianship of God, to commend him to the comfortless experience of his own.

Now, instances of suicide are treated with a foolish and inconsiderate leniency by the world, and without that detestation of its vileness which would arise from a true understanding of its causes, and especially of its chief cause which is not lip atheism merely, but downright *atheism of the heart*. The suicide is he who hath said *in his heart* “There is no God.” Else how could he despair, in whatever misery he might be involved?

We have certainly more than one instance in

our eye, in relation to which we could fervently exclaim with the generous Campbell—

“ *Mild be heaven’s doom on thee, as thou wert mild,
For, oh ! thy soul in heavenly mould was cast,
And all thy deeds were blameless, but the last.*”

Nor can we forget the merciful words of Sir Thomas Browne, our gentle physician, who, when sent for to relieve the body of his patient, would straightway forget his calling, and fall into supplication to God for his soul ; and who could not hear a passing bell, without an earnest prayer for the benefit of the departed. Of so fine a spirit we would carefully weigh the very lightest utterance, and much sooner distrust our strength than his weakness. Now this admirable man says that he cannot think of the mercy and consideration which suicides exhibit for themselves without extreme compassion.

But, however this may be, it cannot be doubted, both from the magnitude of the question, and the alarming frequency of the crime, in which it appears that we no longer retain a superiority over France, that a discussion of the whole subject has long been required. We need a copious collation of the more remarkable instances, with a calm yet profound examination of them, and this would require philosophic powers of a high order.

The desolation of an unguarded and unattended condition would seem a just rebuke to *their* audacity who had forced an entrance into the unseen world, unsummoned thither. There would seem a peculiar propriety and proportion in such a punishment. Could *they* complain of the bereavement however awful, who had themselves occasioned it by a measure violent and unnatural? Could *they* reproach heaven for its cruelty, who had just manifested

such criminal distrust of its goodness? And if the strangeness of the new nature around them was such as to appal, they came into it self-introduced. Can they greatly complain, if they are “left in prisons of earth or air, in secret and undiscerned regions, to weep and tremble?”

We have said that this crime is too leniently judged of; and because the act itself can scarcely be committed except in a paroxysm of frenzy, many are found so weak-minded as not to perceive that it may yet be criminal, and that in a very high degree.

If the insanity at the time of committal was beyond a doubt, the question would still recur. May not such insanity have been naturally and even *judicially* the *result*—it may be the long-delayed, yet not less certain result of a sinful course of unchecked and disordered passions which at last assumed a tyranny unresisted and

irresistible. Or if the sin was of a less gross and obvious, though of an equally deadly nature, the derangement may have been occasioned by that intolerable oppression of anxiety and care which is as base as it is atheistical. For if the thought of God had been there, it would have been felt as a tranquillizing and controlling power. It would have introduced into the heart a central peace, which external agitations would assault in vain. The Author and Preserver of life would have commanded peace and a great calm to the moral, as formerly He did to the elemental, strife, when :—

“ Confusion heard His voice, and wild Uproar stood ruled.”

To return from this painful digression—
When we contemplate our great change, we shall feel the need of a strong faith in the

ministration of angels and of good spirits to support us under it. Death is a fearful fall of the soul by a removal of all its ordinary supports. We cannot doubt then that other supports are provided, and those of a nature exactly suited to our individual necessities. Can we conceive of one going forth out of the bosom of a genial society and of an atmosphere of love and home, and in an instant thrown on his unaided resources, without recoiling from the thought as too frightful to dwell upon ?

And so it must have appeared to Bishop Taylor, who says, "when the veil is rent, and the prison doors are open at the presence of God's angel, the soul goes forth full of hope, and *instantly it passes into the throngs of spirits*, where angels meet it singing ; there they see things which they never saw, and hear voices which they never heard. Fearful and formidable to unholy persons is the first meeting with

spirits in their separation. But the victory which holy souls receive by the mercies of Jesus Christ, and the conduct of holy angels, is a joy that we must not understand till we feel it : and yet such which, by an early and a persevering piety, we may secure: but let us inquire after it no farther, because it is secret.”

Or can we conceive of her, on whom love and homage have always waited, whose pure but impassioned nature has never been without its counterpart objects, to whom friendship however noble would be but an insipid exchange for those keener and more exquisite feelings which are to her as the breath of life, and which the relations of life gave ample room for, but whose occupation, according to the ordinary representations of the other life, is for ever gone—whose infancy was watched

over with untiring care, and whose growth as each day she became

“ More sweet to sense, and lovely to the eye.”

was but the signal for exchanging the caresses of parents for the adoring fondness of a husband ; to whom the tones of love are become a want, and an averted look would be anguish ;—and one who, beside all the deliciousness which what we have said implies, has moreover exulted in all the pride of life, and all the gratifications of sense ; at whose banquets the voice of music ever rose, and in whose gay halls neither mirth, nor song, nor dance, have ever failed, filled as they always were with a bright assemblage of the high, the talented, the valorous and the fair ; and who yet amid so dazzling a scene was scarcely

chargeable with a fault more serious than that of Wordsworth's village maiden,

“ Whose heaviest sin it was to look
Askance upon her pretty self,
Reflected in some crystal brook—”

and whom we only prized the more for some slight frailties because revealing her as

“ A being not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food.”

Can we conceive of her, the heroine of this sentence, after closing her eyes on this world, as at once consigned to a state merely intellectual, with no objects around which her affections might twine or cling, or as entrusted to guardians though of a higher order, but between whom and herself there exists, and can exist, no community of thought, and no congeniality of feeling?

In this case there might be protection, but there would be no society, and that is essential to happiness, for the being we have imagined has always lived in sympathy, and could only exist on its finest reciprocations.

To constitute true society, there is required not only a general agreement of sentiment, but something also of the same grasp of intellect. It is necessary that the parties (if we may so express it) should live at the same rate, and their minds in operation observe a proportion. The mind whose glance is swift as lightning, whose memory holds the records of unfathomable ages before the foundations of the earth were laid, whose experience is rich with the history and achievements, not of one planet, but of an entire System ; such a mind, we say, would but ill accord with our slower procedures, and our scantier knowledge. If in the celestial regions we are to find not protectors merely, but genial friends and companions, then is it neces-

sary that we should meet with those whose faculties and acquirements bear some proportion to our own ; who are not ' too bright nor too good ' for us, as the poet boldly says. " We need something better than security, we ask love."

Is it, then, too hazardous a conjecture, which we before indulged in, considering the variety of offices assigned to the host of heaven, and the different qualifications and almost opposite natures which they must require for their due discharge, that a difference of Sex may be found among *them* also, and all the fervours of private attachment. We conceive that Milton's idea amounted to this, though for the boldness of his speculations on other points we offer no apology, believing them to be as false as they are dangerous.

Even among the few celestial agents introduced in his great poem what a diversity of disposition we remark. How different is the

mild Raphael from the dread Michael, the fiery Gabriel, or Abdiel the Faithful and Unterrified—

“ Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deigned
To travel with Tobias, and secured
His marriage with the seventimes-wedded maid.”

and to the rebel-host we may extend the same remark. How contrasted are the fierce Moloch, the gay and voluptuous Belial, the majestic Beelzebub, the terrific gloom of Satan !

But the reader will probably demand a more pointed and distinct intimation of the opinion which which we have ascribed to the great poet. The general strain of his speculation, always so noble and free, would, we think, bear us out, but we have in the following lines a decided declaration. Adam had been relating to Raphael what he remembered since his own creation, and, among the rest, his first meeting

and nuptials with Eve, and had acknowledged how weak he found himself—

“ Against the charm of Beauty’s powerful glance—”

He, then, very naturally continues—

“ Love, thou sayst
 Leads up to heaven, is both the way and guide ;
 Bear with me, then, if lawful what I ask ;
 Love not the heavenly spirits, and how their love
 Express they ? by looks only ? or do they mix
 Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch ?
 To whom the angel, with a smile that glowed
 Celestial rosy red, love’s proper hue,
 Answered, Let it suffice thee that thou know’st
 Us happy, and without love no happiness.
 Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy’st,
 (And pure thou wert created), we enjoy
 In eminence, and obstacle find none.”

These are sentiments worthy of the celestial colloquy.

We have not, then, unduly attributed to

him our own conjecture, for, we believe, all will agree with us, that if without love there is no happiness, then without sex there is no love ; none at least in the high, peculiar, and transcendent sense. The closest friendship which has existed between men falls greatly short of it. It may in its choicest illustrations have approximated *nearly* to a state not unworthy of that sacred name. But in every such instance it has arisen from this, that a boon nature has mingled the elements with unusual bounty, bringing together, with a rare felicity of union, those qualities which are in general dissevered.

It would be easy to refer to many examples of this. Let us take the highest. Our blessed Lord it is trite to remark, was especially attached to the disciple John. In Peter he recognised a more masculine understanding, and a more intrepid zeal, plainly designating

him for the foremost place of either honor or danger, and for the leadership of the sacred band ; but John was the disciple whom he *loved* ; and what do we remark as the characteristics of this favoured apostle ? Less of prominence in the individual traits of character, but a more benign and harmonious combination. His temper was lamblike. Hence to him was congenially entrusted the adorable Mary—that precious charge—she who was the chosen Lily of Chastity—the Ark of the second Covenant.

And if there are some who glory in refusing to her those honors which are certainly her due, as foretold in her own prophetic hymn, and which “ all generations” ought delightedly to award, these, we say, only glory in their shame. Sir Thomas Browne could never hear an Ave Maria without a secret elevation, even when it came from those, who un-

duly extended her claims, by addressing to her their prayers, and by invoking her patronage. But, as he beautifully says—"because they offended in one point, he would not offend in all," that is, in charity and sympathy.

And Wordsworth remarks of those who kneeled before her shrine in a darker age, that he hopes that they may have done so "not unforgiven."

It was this idea which was the inspiration of the Flemish and Italian painter. It was this which, in an iron age, exhibited meekness triumphant over force, swaying rude hearts with an all-commanding power. It was this which, among the sterner features of Christian polemics, was a reconciling vision of loveliness and truth. It was this which was an article of peace among the dogmas of religion, which are too often articles of war.

It is true that here was the undue extension

and exaggeration of an impulse originally noble and pure. But shall we on that account regard it as unmixed evil? If this weed of Error bears but one flower of Hope, oh, let us pass, and leave it there.

We have recorded the sympathy in this feeling of two of our most illustrious countrymen, and they the adherents of no foreign faith, but conscientious followers of our own communion. But what communion can there be between the coarse and ignorant fanatics whom we denounce, and the inspirations of genius and exalted sensibility? They may wear the garb—they may receive the emoluments, but they are no legitimate members of the Anglo-Catholic Church. Hooker and Pearson and Taylor would have disdained to acknowledge them as such.

To revert to the point whence we set out. We have in the course of this and the pre-

ceding chapter, examined some instances of angelic interposition. Nor are these to be considered otherwise, than as in the usual course of occupation of the aerial people.

We shall proceed in the following section to discuss some more examples, but of a widely different kind, and which will serve to strengthen the position which we have already taken. The Biblical student will know at once to what we refer—to those majestic prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel which require no art of the scholar, and no labour of the Critic to establish their divinity, resplendent as they every where are with Heaven's own inimitable lightning.

CHAPTER VII.

“ Let us try to persuade ourselves that the future and unseen world, with all its momentous transactions, is as simply natural and true, as is this homely world of land and water, trees and houses, with which we have now to do.”

PHYSICAL THEORY OF ANOTHER LIFE.

WE have stated in a former chapter that the subject of angels scarcely obtains a place in the minds of the generality, so slight is the real belief, if not in their existence, yet in their power and superintendence.

And certainly it tasks our faith to the uttermost to retain a practical conviction, and an

abiding assurance. We find no difficulty in admitting the being and attributes of God, because these are all *necessary*. All creation implies a Maker—All virtue supposes a Rewarder ; all sin an enemy and avenger—Our own imperfect knowledge leads our thoughts upward to One who knoweth all things ; our limitless desires to One who can satisfy them—Our recent origin only fixes our attention on One who had no beginning, but hath existed from everlasting—Our crippled powers refer us to Him whose dominion is absolute and unconfined. Our short foresight only contrasts the more strongly with his gaze who seeth the end from the commencement, and the things which are not, as though they were.

Now all these truths receive at once an unhesitating assent, because they are necessary and defy ejection from the mind.

But the angels are not *necessary*. The Al-

mighty might execute all things by His immediate fiat. But it is not His will so to do, a system of mediation evidently pervades this world. Is it not then more likely that it also pervades all worlds—that it obtains through the universe?

Yet an opposite idea seems present to most minds. They see that while on earth they are born, and clothed, and fed, and taught, and healed, not by the fiat of the Supreme, but by the hand of mediators. But they seem to imagine that let them once enter within the veil, which now screens from their sight the world of Spirits, and they shall find all this reversed. No doubt the idea is vaguely conceived, and would be variously expressed, but the prevailing notion unquestionably is, that somewhere in the vast of Space there is a bright centre, where the Almighty has established His residence, and where He holds his court, and is beheld

bodily by the surrounding worshippers. Moreover, they conceive that there they will have immediate and personal access to the Infinite Majesty, as a man converseth with his friend.

They virtually believe that the plan of mediation which is so universal *here*, will *there* be less frequently called into operation, and perhaps be actually dissolved. An exception is of course made in the person of Him who bore both natures.

Now they are assuming far too much, and much more than they can prove, when they think that, even in our present correspondence with heaven, the Almighty will suffer no mediation to be used but that of the Redeemer. If our friends and well-wishers on earth are not only allowed but encouraged to intercede for us, shall our happier friends above be excluded from an office so endearing? Much holier must be *their* prayers, much more powerful *their* in-

tercession. We may invoke the prayers neither of saint nor of angel, nevertheless we may steadily rely on their patronage and feel reassured under a sense of their protection.

Nor are we at all more warranted in supposing that there will be less of mediation in the world unseen than there is here. On the contrary, we may fairly presume that, isolated as we now are in creation, debarred from all correspondence with any other race of beings, or any other Orb than our own, we appear uplifted much nearer to the Primal Glory than there we shall. We are now travelling in a bye path, but when we join the main stream of Existence in the open field of the Universe, we may then see a hundred races intervening between us and the Eternal Throne, and all of more ancient birth, and more glorious faculties. We may by them be regarded as a younger branch of the great family, of a sad and mysterious history,

who laboured under an evil taint from the beginning, and were emancipated by a wondrous economy, and we may even there be mainly indebted for our welfare to their love and charity.

But when we speak of our present state, which is one of seclusion, and of separation from all other portions of the empire of the Eternal, and contrast it with our hereafter rejoining the main stream of existence, and entering into fellowship with all godlike beings, we would not forget that it is all uncertain, where that future abode which we entitle 'heaven' shall be. For aught that appears to the contrary, and there are many reasons which favour the supposition, it may have no other 'whereabouts' than the earth which we now inhabit.

For, firstly, would not the process of reconquering this domain from the effects of the primal curse—a domain which, amidst all its beauty and teeming fertility, bears in many of

its aspects the appearance of a ruin ; would not the clothing it anew in renovated lustre, and making it an efflorescence of loveliness and glory, illustrate in the most striking and in the grandest manner, the power and goodness of the Creator ? To make those winds, which, from extreme cold, are often so adverse to life, and from extreme heat are impregnated with languor and disease, are enfeebling and devouring,—to make them the channels of an unvarying purity, and freshness, and animation. And that sun, which casts but a scanty beam on earth's extremities, leaving to them a long half year of cold and darkness, while he governs all the central space with a fierce tyrannic blaze—to make him the dispenser of nought but fruitfulness, and health, and vigour, and enjoyment. And that ocean in its gloom so awful, so furious and terrifying in its rage, to make it the mild

and tractable minister of man, imparadising all lands amid waves of eternal brightness—And every wild and ravenous beast, which now glares on man, or would devour him, to make such return to their first reverence, and to that state of affectionate fidelity which still lingers among one of their tribes, as of old in Paradise, when—

“ About them frisking played
All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase
In wood, or wilderness, forest, or den ;
Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw
Dandled the kid ; bears, tygers, ounces, pards,
Gamboled before them ; the unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed
His lithe proboscis.”

To effect all this would indeed be worthy of Him who maketh all things new. All this, we say, may again be realised. We do not say that such is our *opinion* ; all that we maintain

is, that, as it involves nothing either irrational or improbable, it is at least an innocent and allowable speculation.

That this earth should disappear in the great Conflagration, and its place be found no more in space, is not only inconsistent with science, but with that uniform economy of power and resources which is every where observable throughout creation.

Nor is this all—we know, from Scripture, that such has been the principle of the divine procedure in *one* instance, and, from geology, we know that it has so happened in numerous instances. Man is but the tenant of yesterday, the very recent tenant of an abode which, not *once only*, but *many times over*, has been emptied of its inhabitants, and then repaired and re-embellished for the reception of newcomers.

Saint Peter asserts that as the earth once

‘perished by water,’ so it is destined to ‘perish by fire,’ and if it emerged from the deluge of waters, why may it not emerge from the tempest of fire?

Antecedently, it may appear more probable, that we shall be transferred to some new region, with whose idea sin, and sorrow, and death, have never been associated. But even if this planet should be the Elysium of the Blest, there is nothing in that conjecture to militate with the belief that we shall hereafter be admitted to a correspondence with the other orders and races of the universe.

We have alluded to the popular notion that hereafter the Deity will be beheld bodily. But how does this agree with the assertion that God is a Spirit, an omnipresent Spirit, without body, parts, or passions, who, “if we climb up into heaven, is there, and, if we go down to hell, is there also?” “Him no man hath seen or can

see." Is this spoken only in relation to our present imperfect powers of vision, or will it hereafter be equally true? When we are told that in the future state we shall be confronted with Him "face to face," are we to understand by this, that we shall actually see Him as an object, or merely, that we shall then feel ourselves as truly under his gaze, and as immediately in His presence, with as absolute a sense of reality as when under the inspection of a fellow mortal.

Strange it is, but undeniable, that such is not already our unvarying consciousness. But so much does the body of decay wherewith we are encompassed diminish the sharpness and intensity of our mental impressions, that some of us are conscious at times of being disposed to doubt the reality of the surrounding landscape, to question whether it is not after all only the "dream of a shadow."

Will the Deity for ever remain as invisible for instance, as are the powers of electricity or magnetism, the existence of which is only known by their products?

This is a mystery 'past finding out,' we may, however, remember, to our comfort, that in the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity an ample provision is made for satisfying the natural craving of the human mind after an object of visible adoration.

We have alluded to the opinion that there is somewhere a Centre of the Universe where shines the Divine Glory in its brightest lustre and effulgence. Now this belief we hold to be as valuable as it is philosophical—and the opposite opinion that there is, and can be, no centre, because space is infinite, and the realm of the Eternal unbounded, and the number of worlds which it contains countless, we hold to be as false as it is dangerous. We are aware that it

possesses a fascination for some minds, as it seems to make a more profound exhibition of the Divine resources, and to present a grander idea. But examined more narrowly, this will be found to be a delusive impression.

In truth, this supposition of the infinity of creation is untenable, and even nonsensical. When possessed by it we can scarcely exclude the painful apprehension that, after all, we may be overlooked by the Almighty, and our happiness be uncared-for by Him. It is a thought so painful as to be the forerunner of Despair.

Now, in refutation of it, we may observe that Time and Space, according to the deepest philosophy now known, have no external objectivity, but are merely subjective, and the results of our mental organisation. Besides, if space had a real existence and was infinite, it would not follow thence that the number of worlds was also unlimited.

To accept or reject an opinion merely according to a scale of superior or inferior easiness of conception would, surely, be unphilosophical. But judged even so, the idea of a *void* and formless Infinite comes more easily within our mental grasp, than that of infinite space filled with Suns and Systems innumerable. The effect of the latter theory is to overpower, and dazzle, and confound. It is equivalent to saying, that the Almighty knows not at any given time how many worlds He has created, nor, consequently, how many or *where* are the subjects of His universal empire. It is virtually to say that the creation is too large for its Ruler, too vast for his inspection and control.

Has not such been often the impression, aided by the error which we combat, of the discoveries of our modern astronomy when falling upon weak or unsteady minds?

Hence we set the highest value on the in-

culcation of this truth, that the Universe is strictly finite, limited on the side of the great as well as the little; moreover that there is a definite number of Worlds, and occasionally, perhaps, additions to that number. We have heard, too, of the disappearance of stars from the heavens. It may be that, after being emptied of their inhabitants who were transferred through the portals of death (as we ourselves shall be) to distant regions, they were then set on fire, and melted 'into thin air,' so that the extinction of old worlds counterbalanced the creation of new.

We have, by the microscope, touched the extremity of organised life on the side of the diminutive, we may, too, by the aid of the telescope, and a conceivable perfection of that instrument, be able hereafter to sweep the field of the universe, and reach the extremity of organised matter on the side of the Vast. We

may at all events approximate to the number of existing worlds.

Mr. Whewell remarks in his Bridgewater Treatise:—" For any thing we can discover, the sun is the largest body in the universe, or at least, bodies of the rank and order of the sun are the largest of which we have any evidence." The views of the Professor on this subject strongly contrast with those random and extravagant assertions which are continually heard, and which are so often mistaken for sublimity of conception.

In truth, a conviction that God's empire is literally bounded and finite is necessary to our religious comfort and to the feeling of security. When this is attained, *and not before*, all fear of being overlooked by him vanishes. For our heavenly Father's kingdom, though vast beyond the thoughts of any of His children, hath yet its limits. Without this conviction, prayer

would but faintly ascend to Him, whose ear is subject to infinite distractions. Without it, speaking after the manner of men, we cannot conceive the Almighty as *at leisure* to survey his works and to meditate their good. Without it, we feel as in a foreign land, we lose the atmosphere of home, and its sweet sense of security. The effect of the error we condemn is to dazzle and bewilder.

And, if we may illustrate great things by small, we have, when entertaining this latter hypothesis, much of that undefined and unsatisfactory feeling which possesses the stranger, when gazing on one of the vast illimitable plains of the Continent. There is a kind of vague sadness, arising from the want of unity, and of a centre to which all things may be referred. Now all that is lacking in this case the eye and the heart both find in one of the valleys of our native land, in one of the quiet

circumscribed scenes of our island home. A domestic and endearing air pervades the spot. For here every interest is represented, every want supplied. For there stands the church whose silent finger points to heaven, and around it, as about a mother, are gathered a brood of cottages, overrun with ivy and with roses. And there, too, are found the abodes of the different orders of society, while in the distance towers the feudal castle amidst

“A boundless contiguity of shade.”

How small the encincture, yet how wide the grasp of interests and of pursuits! Quiet industry, humble neighbourhood, and princely repose and seclusion, alike find their place. The village hind, the homely frugal farmer, the lofty statesman, the blunt sailor, the far-famed conqueror, a bevy of fair and high-born wo-

men, who are the cynosure of all eyes, the magnet of all hearts, all these are here, while between them all, the servant of God is a beloved and reconciling medium. For though naturally belonging to the higher, he is the friend and companion of all classes. Like the king, he is the head of all societies. And though the good man has no outward state, and his modest mansion lays claim to none, yet has he that high sense of himself which befits one who bears no earthly commission, and who has received the Spirit of God, through the dispensation of a long line of saints and martyrs. His life is one labour of beneficence. His feet are found where his heart is also, beside the altar or the font, it may be amid the graves or in the grey church porch, or he is seen surveying with an eye of boundless love, the mirth of the village green, or the sports of the young amid those lawns and

enclosures which his fine taste has formed or embellished, or kneeling a ministering angel by the bed of the sick or dying, or spiritualising the toil of the husbandman in the hop-garden or the corn-field. In the words of Heber, himself an excellent type of the character, "His morning and evening walk are a source of blessing and blessedness." Such, at least, is the fair ideal, nor is it unfrequently realised.

Now in this panorama are blended earth's happiest and most sequestered scenes with her highest glories and most consummate refinement. While over all is heard religion's gentle voice. For to the devout the very sight of God's time-honoured house is an admonition strong as that ancient cry of the Church "lift up your hearts." In such a contemplation the senses are filled, but not distracted, there is that charm of unity and ascertained relation,

which leaves nothing to be desired. Our souls are elevated and they are soothed.

Now to transfer to the celestial what has been so pleasing in the terrestrial prospect. There, too, we would wish to see a whole, a completion, and a finiteness. And if from the vastness of the stage we are unable to discern it, yet would we hope at least *to feel that it is there.*

But to return to the strict argument. If we suppose that Space is a real substance, then it must be granted that any limitation to it is quite inconceivable. We cannot imagine any crystal ramparts of the universe, separating the realms of day from those of “Chaos and old Night.”—It is hard to fancy”

“ *Flammatia mœnia mundi.*”

But if we may reject whatever is inconceivable,

how many articles would quickly vanish from our religious creed. Certainly among these the self-existence of the Deity, His omnipresence, and His omniscience. But, as we said before, there is the best reason for believing that space and time are nothing in themselves, but are merely elements of human understanding, the two moulds in which all our conceptions are cast.

Moreover, the error which we contest has gathered some votaries from the idea that an Infinite God must act in an infinite manner, and His attributes flow out into illimitable operation. Hence that the universe is the infinite coeternal emanation of His Deity, as the sunbeams are coeval with the luminary whence they issue. But every thing which we see around us confutes this belief. On every side we remark a subdued and reserved exercise of the divine power, a restraining rather than a

manifestation of it: insomuch that the wicked man finds it possible to “say in his heart there is no God.”

Besides, the recent origin of man, would, on this theory, be unaccounted for, proving, as it does, that all things did not exist from the beginning, but that new creations appeared at remote intervals.

In England we are not in much danger from such a creed, but it has a fascination for the subtle German, or the dreaming Oriental. But monstrous as this error is, yet the idea that the universe is infinite, logically involves it; it involves *Pantheism*. The idea is vague, senseless, atheistic, or, if you will, *Pantheistic*, for they amount to the same thing.

Before we dismiss this topic, we would briefly advert to what may have disposed many to cherish the opinion that the heavens are filled with innumerable worlds—that creation

is unbounded. It is, we are persuaded, a latent fear, lest in a finite universe we should exhaust every possible subject of interest, and vainly demand some fresh object of curiosity or wonder, under the sad influences of sameness and satiety.

And, truly, if material things were the principal food of meditation, and a mere external knowledge the highest attainment, some scope for such an apprehension might exist. But a rational view of the occupations of a future state would at once dispel it. This silly and groundless alarm proceeds from a wide-spread error which we have before denounced and confuted. We allude to the opinion that when we attain 'that world' and the resurrection of the dead, all moral questions will be disposed of and set at rest for ever—the controversy with evil fully and finally arranged—and that nothing will remain but recollections of labour

and unrestrained enjoyment. Men, moreover, conceive that unruffled harmony will pervade the circles of the Blessed, and not a murmured difference arise to disturb their deep Beatitude.

The permanence of Sex is not for a moment to be thought of—A placid and equal good will to all that breathe is substituted (a poor and tame compensation !) for that raptured love we prize here so dearly.

Now where such an Elysium as this occupies the fancy, the pursuit of knowledge will naturally assume a paramount place and position. Far other are *our* conceptions. We believe that moral questions will arise in that other world much in the same way as they do in this ; that the mysteries of the divine government will not altogether disappear, but still remain to exercise our modesty, and to excite our awe. We anticipate that the principle of faith will be in as full requisition there as it is here ; that

difficulties will have to be encountered, and progress to be made.

If it were not so, both love and devotion would languish, and gratitude to God be less piercing and heartfelt, for all these are intensified by the arduousness of the trials we have to undergo. We conceive that among the main topics of interest in the next world will be controversies ethical and political, and the solution of moral complications.

Let us not, then, crave an illimitable material universe, on the plea of variety. It is not in matter but in mind that eternal variety is to be sought.

“ Mind, mind alone—bear witness, earth and heaven!—
The living fountain in itself contains
Of beauteous and sublime. There attired
The Graces sit, and there, enthroned on high,
Celestial Venus, with divinest airs,
Invites the soul to never-fading joys.”

Look within, said the Greek philosopher, within is the fountain of good, and ever ready to gush forth, if you will only dig assiduously, and lay bare its sources. Mind is an ever-bubbling spring of fresh thoughts, the parent of fresh deeds, in unexhausted novelty of combination.

It was a profound sense of this which led the Count Segur, that excellent historian of the Russian Expedition, to say, in reply to some who urged that if the Emperor had duly consulted the records of the past, he would never have undertaken that fatal enterprize, as he must have seen, by the light of similar instances in other times, that defeat was inevitable:—“ Of what advantage,” says the Count, “ is the study of history in a world like this, where no two states, and not even two individuals, from the beginning of time, were ever placed in the same situation ? ” Or, as the same senti-

ment s more strikingly conveyed in that fine saying of the Irish Chancellor—

“ What after all, is history, but an old almanack.”

There is yet one more misconception to which we will briefly advert. It relates to the steadfastness in virtue and absolute security of the Saved. The prevailing idea is, that *their* fall will be physically impossible, that the soul will be *stereotyped*, and so for ever stand fixed.

Now, we believe in the fact, but we do not concur as to the manner of its effectuation. The generality seem to hold that the security of the Blessed will arise by the way of edict or decree. But this notion does violence to the very nature of Spirit, whose essence is Freedom. Spirit can never become a dead fixed thing, for as Coleridge would inform us, all Spirit is an

Act, a perpetual immanent Act. Now if this be so, and mind is in perpetual motion, what are the resolves, what is the virtue of any created spirit, if set to confront the changes and chances, and temptations of an eternity? Shall we not then be as much under probation as ever, though with constantly diminishing chances of ultimate defection? and if Scripture is silent on this point, might it not arise from this, that lifting the veil of the unseen world would discover too vast and overwhelming a prospect to our souls, ever anxious to consider the grave as a resting place, after great fatigues? Our eternal safety will doubtless be secured by the *natural* operation of moral causes and inducments, not by a fiat of the Almighty, which would release us from all care as to our virtue, by ensuring its everlasting stability. The obedience of the elements to the primal command is absolute, but physical certainty has no place in the region of Spirit.

We believe that they who are acquitted in the great day will be secure for ever, but we cannot concur in the arguments by which this position is often sought to be defended. Thus, in support of it, is often quoted that passage of Solomon—"Where the tree falleth, there it shall lie." Now these words have no reference whatever to future Salvation, and the use of them we have instanced is no more than an arbitrary application. Besides, it is not by dead matter that one could even *illustrate* the fortunes of mind.

The topics introduced in this chapter possess at least a collateral interest to our main subject, but we must now defer to the next our further consideration of the employments of angels, merely premising that when we are discussing their state we are also discussing our own futurity.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Then said I, O my Lord, what are these? And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest.”

ZECHARIAH.¹

WE have said that considerable faith is required for the admission of the guardianship of angels. To believe that this our planet is haunted evermore by invisible agents is to many no easy achievement. For where *nothing is seen*, we deem ourselves at liberty to infer that *nothing exists*. Yet, without the micro-

scope, what myriads of organised beings would have for ever escaped our vision !

And surely, while we acknowledge how invisible are the great powers of nature, for instance the magnetic stream, or the principle of gravitation, (real and tremendous agencies as they are) why should we hesitate to admit, that if a Power may exist unseen, a person may do so equally ?

We will now resume the inquiry.—In the first chapter of the prophet Ezekiel we have a vision of four Cherubims. The same occurs again in the tenth chapter. Commentators are much divided as to the interpretation which ought to be given to this majestic apparition. Some consider it a revelation of the Divine Glory, and others of celestial though created beings. Much might be urged for either supposition. Of them it is said, “ And this was their appearance ; they had the likeness of

a man." Again, "they had the hands of a man under their wings." We refer the reader to the entire description of the living creature that the prophet saw by the river of Chebar. But the one circumstance we have selected for notice, (viz., their resemblance to man), would seem to imply, at least under the latter hypothesis, what we have before earnestly contended for, that the inhabitants of heaven have like passions, desires, and faculties with ourselves.

And this view would naturally lead us to a consideration of their origin. It is the fancy of the multitude that they are sky-born, that their race from the beginning has been run through a scene of enchantment, and that they never came into contact with the stern realities of existence, at least in their own persons, but only in the way of assistance or commiseration for ourselves.

Now this is a mere fancy and it is competent

to any one to refuse to entertain it. Whence the angels sprang is a point not once alluded to in the Inspired Word. But, if in truth, they *have* always existed in their present state of sublimation, whence can arise that perfect acquaintance with the affairs of earth, and that sympathy with the sorrows of man, which we ascribe to them, and which can alone qualify them to be our protectors and comforters ?

Now in the work whence we selected a motto for our last chapter the idea is started (new to us, and we doubt not to our readers) that the “ spiritual beings, good and evil, that are spoken of in the Scriptures, are all, or most of them, *of mundane origin* ; and although some may now have come to move in a wider circle, that they have all sprung from this soil.”

This conjecture has many arguments in its favour. It accords with the revealed futurity

of our own race. For we believe that after passing the first term of our existence here, we shall be translated to ethereal regions, where mansions have been long in preparation. We believe, too, that after we have been laid in the dust, this imperfect and sluggish body, the human crysalis, shall, at length, find wings, and emerge into fields of radiance and beauty. This, then, is not a wild idea, but strictly rational, for it presents a complete analogy to our own case.

It accords with that general law of progression which obtains through the universe. It agrees with that principle enunciated by Saint Paul, that in all things the natural precedes the spiritual. It is in harmony with the discoveries of modern science, which tells that this earth has been inhabited before the creation of man by other races. It satisfactorily accounts for that interest which they feel in our affairs, and

for the disclosure which Scripture makes that they control our destinies, national and individual. We are aware that on one of these points we shall have to sustain a controversy. It will by many be grudgingly admitted that the Angels may indeed superintend individual welfare, and by some even this interference would be restricted to things spiritual, but not that among them may be those who have received appointment from on high to guide the fate of empires, and to bear the weight of loftiest monarchies.

But this reluctance, on the part of perhaps the majority of Christians, would only suffice to shew what a meagre and shrivelled thing is that system of abstractions which is generally mistaken for a complete body of theology. The minds of men begin to demand more generous food

“ The human mind by age grows lustier,
 Her appetite and her digestion mend.
 Ye may not hope to starve, or pamper her,
 With woman’s milk and pap unto the end ;
 Provide you manlier diet.”

Men begin to sigh after wider contemplations, and to require more food for the affections than can be supplied by the *hortus siccus* of the Evangelical world.

And here we may well remark as a portent and a phenomenon, that out of a written Revelation so free, so copious, so generous and unbounded in its sympathies—so ardent and un-systematic in its structure—so diversified in its appeals, not to one, but to every known or conceivable principle, whether of our animal, intellectual, or moral nature—so essentially, and almost entirely, historical or poetic, both law and gospel

“ Strewn with song—”

W

—so full of picture, as to be a source of endless adoration to the artist,—so multifarious in its contents, and all-embracing in its interests and allusions, (and the lives of its saints and worthies, the recognised favourites of the Almighty, and commemorated by Him in that record as exemplars of those qualities and of that general state of mind and heart which He admires and approves, almost without an exception, how noble, how majestic, how heroical are they !) should be constructed a System so stinted in its charities,—in its subjects so narrow and monotonous,—in its tone so harsh and dry, and, not unfrequently, revolting,—so chilling and repressive to Poetry or Art,—so forbidding in its aspect, and in the style and pattern of its saintship so tame and flat, so uninteresting and prosaic, as that which, nevertheless, is proclaimed to be the purest essence of the Christian faith, and whose disciples we have just

adverted to by their self-chosen appellation.

Strange is it that a system in which prayer is subordinate and extended sympathy is held unsanctified should even *profess to be gathered* out of a Book of which Devotion is the soul, and Love is the crowning virtue. Marvellous is it, that the Bible, so replete with reverence for established things,—so hearty in its recognition of the various tendencies of our nature and of the institutions which have sprung from them,—so anti-utilitarian in its philosophy, even a the Universe before our eyes is in its formation—a Book so magnificent and so royal in its temper, should be appealed to as the patron of a theology which undervalues antiquity, which ministers but to a fragment of our humanity, and exorcises the rest, whose law is a frigid utility, and which ever looks blank and sour on

ample ceremonial and generous display, even when consecrated by man to the holiest uses.

The spirit of that Book and congenial traditions in the way both of precept and of usages, would naturally generate a noble and stately system, lofty in its aims, and prodigal in its generosity. And such *is* in truth the system of the Holy Catholic Church—and such would more fully be acknowledged to be the features of that purest branch of it, our own Establishment, if unhappily it had not been shorn of its fair proportions, and surrounded by the malign influences of a religious democracy. The counter system is no genuine emanation of the Gospel, but an abortion of the last three hundred years—and does it follow no Tradition? why, its whole interpretation of the Bible is traditional. But it is a tradition derived from those impure and fanatical sectaries of the middle

ages, who were expelled from the bosom of the Church for their errors, and who, as might naturally be expected, retorted upon Her the foulest abuse ;* or perchance it flowed from the ignoble authority of Calvin, the burner of Servetus, or of Knox, that ruthless Russian of the Scotch Reformation. The prevalence of these views is only one among a thousand illustrations of the maxim that ' extremes meet.' A maxim which, Coleridge tells us, would exhaust philosophy in its application.

But to return to our subject, and to come to the proof which Scripture affords that supernatural beings mingle largely in the conduct of human affairs. This may be found, we conceive, in two of the prophets, in Daniel and Zechariah. It appears from them that tutelary

* See Todd's Donellan Lectures before the University of Dublin.

angels are appointed over empires and quarters of the world, that by them dynasties are sustained, and national interests promoted.

This belief is not so strange, or antecedently improbable, as to require an extraordinary amount of proof. On the contrary, it is recommended to our acceptance not only from the doctrine appearing in so many quarters, but from its falling under that general system of mediation by which the divine government is administered. It is the poverty of our imaginations arising from our present state of seclusion and non-intercourse with the rest of the universe, which causes us to feel as if nothing intervened between us and the court of heaven. It is more probable that our fates and fortunes are, at least to a considerable extent, entrusted to the guidance of those lieutenants of Providence whom we surname angels, subject of course to an appeal, and

occasionally to a more direct interference of the Supreme Majesty.

We apprehend the main objection to this ancient belief would consist in a feeling (we use that word advisedly, for it could scarcely be sustained by serious argument) that supernal natures would be more *spiritually* employed, and that themes so agitating as our earthly transactions would but ill accord with their smooth beatitude, and beautiful and unruffled passions. We picture them as occupied in acts of unceasing adoration, and it appears like sacrilege to intermingle them, even in thought, with the turmoils of earth.

This, however, is a purely gratuitous fancy, though, from its very nature, it deserves to be treated with respect and tenderness. Moreover, it is a notion as shallow as it is gratuitous ;—for if *their* faculties resemble ours, such a condition of immortality may be pronounced

impossible. Besides, to entertain it, we must unlearn all our ideas of nobleness and heroism. We must, in fact, say that the excellence of the other world and of this present reversed ideas. We must maintain that the love and charity of the celestial are quite different qualities from those of the sublunary sphere.

For what is the case? Our present conception of worthiness and virtue is that it consists in action and manly vigour. Our idea of love is, that it is not only manifested but nurtured and augmented by oblivion of self and practical beneficence to others. It is revealed by comfort sacrificed and danger braved. The enlightened mind turns with disdain from the religionist who is ever nursing his devotion apart from his fellow-men, not perceiving that outward acts alone perfect inward habits, and, neglecting to take his due part in the offices, or to share in the generous

enterprises of life, in order that he may have more time to cultivate what he calls the “interests of his soul.” But those interests are best advanced by eradicating from the mind every trace of *selfishness*, *for that is a quality which, be it remembered, can find its food in eternal as easily as in temporal objects.*

To illustrate our position—Coleridge relates two of the most distinguished philanthropists of the age, who devoted their energies to demonstrating the iniquity and almost incredible cruelty of the Slave Trade, with a view to its cessation, that one of these, excellent and active as he was, was yet so much engaged in “forwarding his eternal interests” and consulting the welfare of his “soul” as it fluctuated from Sabbath to Sabbath, that he devoted a much less portion of time and thought and labour to the great cause, than was given to it by his more admirable though less renowned

coadjutor. In the hands of the latter, the mighty task, to which he girded every faculty of his being, assumed a character of incessant and unmitigable urgency. Waking or sleeping, it was first and last and midst in all his thoughts. Insomuch that a religious friend inquired of him. "What think you will become of your soul all the while?" "Why," replied he, "as to my soul, I have really no time to think about it. I am so incessantly brooding, morning, noon and night, over the sufferings of the poor Africans, and in devising measures for their liberation!" Here was a Christian indeed! A hero with infantine simplicity! On this tale our poet-philosopher sagely and truly remarks. "There is *other* worldliness equally hateful and selfish with *this* worldliness." Now both of these men were excellent, and their names are embalmed to the latest posterity, but the absolute forgetfulness of

self in the one, and the intense self-consciousness of the other, leave no room to doubt which was the more godlike, and deserved the loftier estimation. We need scarcely add, one of these is now living, the other departed.

Let us, then, beware how we represent celestial goodness as of a lower stamp and of a weaker texture than that kind which most we prize on earth.

Are those qualities of patience, of calm courage, of heroic self-denial, which bring, even at the hour of trial, their own reward in the accompanying sense of inward triumph and glowing self-exaltation, hereafter for evermore to cease—and to find their occupation gone? Is the fervent soul of Paul, who confronted such perils below; to be employed above in nought but hymns and ecstacies and remembrances of past victories, or else, in what are no more than shadowy contests, and unreal

opposition. Would not the spirit of Howard, who had completely quenched every desire of ignoble ease, and lived but to prosecute his glorious labours, turn away with disdain from such an eternity? But it is *not* the futurity of the Bible.

The reward of the faithful and approved servant will be of a manlier kind. To one of them, in the day of recompense, will be said—‘Have thou rule over ten cities—’ and to another—‘Have thou rule over five.’

In truth, we know not how many provinces of God’s empire may present histories similar to our own—as sad—as fatal—as eventful!—It may be, not one—it may also be, ten thousand—We would cherish the brighter supposition—It was the beautiful fancy of a Greek Father that as in the parable of Him who knoweth all things, and whose intelligence pervades all worlds and systems, of the hundred sheep only

one was lost, and the ninety and nine went not astray, so about the same proportion may exist between the rebellious and the loyal provinces of the Divine Government.

It may be we are a dark exception to the general brightness of the universe,

“ A jarring and a dissonant thing,
Amidst her general dance and minstrelsy.”

But, even so, it may likewise be, that, in other worlds, the most fearful evils are only kept in abeyance by the continued exercise of fortitude and forbearance.

It were unwise, then, to deem that a field will ever be wanting in futurity for the display of those high qualities to gain which we are here involved in so much trouble ; and undergo so arduous a discipline.

It is a very ancient opinion, that at the be-

ginning every nation received its angel-governor. The principles is here stated with needless, not to say absurd, precision, but it may be true notwithstanding, that celestial deputies are set over the kingdoms of earth, to guide and to regulate them. And if the theory of their mundane origin which we mentioned above be well-founded, it would greatly enhance the probability of this.

Let us now turn to the Testimony of Truth, and then discuss one or two remaining objections. In the fourth chapter of Daniel we find that angels were appointed to "watch" over the destinies of the Assyrian Empire, and that it was by *their* decree that the sceptre fell from the hand of Nebuchadnezzar and was transferred to that of Darius. For thus says the king in relating his vision to the prophet—"I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, beheld, a Watcher and a Holy One came

down from heaven." And after the Messenger of Doom had announced to him the judicial calamity which was soon to overtake him, he adds, "This matter is by the decree of the Watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." The latter clause assigning this decree to the special will of the Almighty, in no wise neutralises the sense of the former or impugns the supposition that the "Watchers" of this mighty realm were no more than Satraps under the Universal King. For even on earth every righteous decree, we are sure, is according to the Will of the Most High, and will be ratified in the court of heaven.

It is also true that by the Watchers may be understood the Persons of the Sacred Trinity.

But ground for a full decision there is none, and confidence in either interpretation is quite out of place.

Again, in the eighth chapter, the same prophet overheard in a vision a conference of angels to determine the duration of the Hebrew commonwealth. “I heard one Saint speaking, and another Saint said unto that certain Saint which spake, ‘How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice?’ and he said unto me—‘Unto two thousand and three hundred days.’—The rank and dignity of these “Saints” is uncertain. They may be the Mysterious and Coequal Three, or they may be merely glorious creatures. But whichever may be thought the more probable, we deprecate a tone of arrogance and dogmatism.

It may be that even fixing the periods of mighty monarchies and deciding on “the fulness of time” was not beyond the foresight

and sagacity of some at least of the sons of light. Of one great Epoch it is specially said that the Father hath 'reserved it in His own power.' We allude, of course, to the consummation of all things. But the specialty of this reservation seems to imply, that many lesser eras are left to the knowledge and control of created Intelligences.

After this, we find that Gabriel is sent to the prophet to give him 'skill and understanding' and to supply him with a precise intimation of the times. Him both Jews and Mohammedans acknowledge to be an Archangel, and one of those 'Seven' who are nearest to the throne. But Christians have much reason to surmise that under this name may be shadowed forth the Holy Spirit of God. Still, as he is called 'the *man* Gabriel,' we dare not be positive. There is no ground for a confident determination.

But, however this may be, the clearness of

the following announcement of our doctrine can scarcely be exceeded. As the prophet stood by the waters of Hiddekel he saw a glorious apparition, which after telling him of the efforts he had made for the liberation of the Jews from captivity, added, “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia, withheld me one and twenty days; but, lo ! Michael one of the chief princes came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.” The rank of Michael is also uncertain, as well as that of Gabriel, though, coupling this passage with one in Revelation, (xii. 7.) a high probability exists that it is no other than the Lord Jesus. Now conceding the rank of Deity to both Michael and Gabriel, who are the guardian princes of Persia ? evidently angels, entrusted with the superintendence and protection of that kingdom, then why may

not other members of the same order be appointed to overrule all other kingdoms?

And this idea is corroborated by what follows. "Then said he, knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? And now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia, and when I am gone forth, lo! the *prince of Grecia* shall come."

It will be said, but what chance could these created combatants have with the omnipotence of Michael and Gabriel? and Bishop Heber, in the sixth of his Bampton Lectures has thought fit to inquire, "Is it not vain to suppose that the Almighty would even endure the senseless mutiny of these glorious though fragile beings, whom as His breath has made, the withholding of it can annihilate?" The continued existence of the world is a standing refutation of this argument. For has He not borne with the rebellion of His creature man

these six thousand years? Besides the argument, if valid, must go to this extent, that the Almighty will crush even the first beginning of resistance to His will, by an instant decree of annihilation, and then in, His own awful words, “The spirits would fail before Him, and the souls which He had made.”

On every side we see how God restrains the exercise of His omnipotence, and Scripture is full of instances. What we behold is but “the hiding of His power.” It is only by severest limitation that it becomes endurable, or compatible with individual existence. It is for earthly kings to display their might. “The glory of God is to conceal it.” Proverbs xxv. 2.

It is, moreover, right to remark that the case in point is not one of mutiny or wicked resistance. This conference of Angel-governors resembled a Congress of Sovereigns. We may suppose them animated with zeal, each for his

peculiar charge, and urging different views, though all anxious to extend the sphere of terrestial happiness and prosperity. It is the voice of nature to feel a stronger affection for country and kin, or for those with whom we are connected, than for strangers, and it is by the operation of this principle that the common weal of all is best secured. And it shews the perversity of our ideas in all that relates to the next world that we do not conceive the same principle as equally influential there.

The maxim of the generality is, that to form a heaven you must reverse every idea of earth. Hence Sex disappears, hence the denizens of it are clothed in moral and intellectual perfection. A most baseless imagination unfounded in reason, unproved by experience, and totally opposed by Scripture. For that plainly testifies in words without a limitation, “there is none good save one, that is God,”

(or the Good One) and of the angels it says, "He chargeth His angels with folly, and the stars are not pure in His sight." We shall there as here be in a *growing state* morally and intellectually. Our understandings will still be finite, and finiteness implies imperfection, and liability to error. Our hearts, though expanded, will still not be unbounded, but subject to the influence of local ties. Our sources of interest and enjoyment will be as distinct and manifold as they are now. The distance between the mathematician and the poet will not be less vast. Diversity of views and policy will exist there, for onesidedness of the faculties necessarily generates it, even where there is no obliquity of the heart, or intentional error. Great sacrifices will still be demanded, and a conquest over every meaner passion. And it is only by thus connecting the two worlds that we can find a reason for

the discipline we are subjected to here, or be enabled to justify the ways of God to man. The Bishop, then, ought not to have been startled at the opposition manifested on the high occasion we have reviewed. The eternal lull which he imagines would at last become torture, for

“ Quiet to quick bosoms is a hell.”

The next testimony which we shall adduce is that of Zechariah the prophet, and, as a mere reference is often unheeded, the passage shall be printed entire, “ I saw by night, and behold, a man, riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom ; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white. Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will tell thee

what these be. And the men that stood among the myrtle trees, answered and said, These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold all the earth sitteth still and is at rest." Again, "And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains ; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses ; and in the second chariot, black horses ; and in the third chariot, white horses ; and in the fourth chariot, grisled and bay horses. Then I answered, and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these my lord ? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth

from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country ; and the white go forth after them ; and the grisled go forth toward the south country. And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth ; and he said, Get ye hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth. Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country." The force and bearing of this passage is so clear that sophistry only can evade it. It is a distinct asseveration that the Almighty has committed to angelic ministers the administration of the affairs of this lower world ; that they are the "eyes" of His providence, and bear His commission. Moreover, it asserts that provinces are assigned to them,

some in the north country, some in the south, even as to the lieutenants of an earthly government. And as the guardian spirit of an individual may be supposed to contract a peculiar affection for his charge, and tenderly to sustain him, ‘lest at any time he dash his foot against a stone,’ so in like manner may we conceive of those to whom is assigned a more extended sway.

We may all differ as to the details of this vision, and what the divers colours may portend. But the disclosure which it makes is irresistible. Nor has it to contend with any antecedent improbability, but the reverse, for it falls in, as we argued in a former chapter, with that system of mediation which we may justly deem universal. Even the law, as Stephen reminded his hearers, was received by ‘the disposition of angels.’ And the Apostle would have us take heed how we behave ourselves in the House of

God, for we are in their sacred presence. It is a glorious illustration, too, of that high doctrine of the 'Communion of Saints' so prized by every sympathetic heart ; and connects us in glowing thought, even on sublunary questions, with "angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven."

To this view it has been often objected that ascribing as it does to these glorified beings so paramount a control over the affairs of the universe, it may incidentally lead to the worship of them. It might with as much reason be alleged that we are in danger of worshipping the Emperor of Russia, seeing that he sways a glorious sceptre over more than sixty millions of subjects. But, in truth, there *would be* considerable danger of this result if the angels ever came within the sphere of vision. If we ever witnessed so fine an apparition alight on this earth, if there ever fell on our listening ear the aerial music which they scatter, as they do

God's bidding in the clouds, or if we saw them cross our skies amid tempest and gloom, and heard their voices of stern command, like mighty thunderings, we could not refuse to tremble and love, perhaps not even to adore. Such was the impulse of the blessed John ; it would be our impulse too, forgetting for a moment that the most fiery of those 'ardours' is no more than a 'fellow servant.'

There is yet one objection which we have slightly adverted to before, but to which we will now give a further answer. It will be said that the occupations of the blest are all 'spiritual,' and that employments such as we have ascribed to them, are not of that description. We here remark a misapplication of the term 'spiritual.' That word is usually confined to one department of duties, to the great injury of religion and morals. Whereas *it includes all duties of every kind.* Whatever comes under the review of conscience is spiritual in its

nature. Every act of justice, fortitude, charity, prudence, nay even courtesy itself deserves to be so denominated. He who rightly discharges any of these offices is a spiritual workman, albeit not the highest. For these are all to be numbered among things eternal. The outward scenery of their exercise may be gathered up like a scroll, and disappear ; no more trace of them may be found than—

“ Of smoke in air, or foam upon the wave—”

but they are not without record. The act, or the omission, may be long ago forgotten, but deep, deep within the spirit, is the *result* engraven, nor can aught efface it.

Strange, then, is the delusion which excludes from the region of the Spiritual, some of its chief constituents. How often under the in-

fluence of this infatuation is it seen that the man who deems himself pre-eminently “spiritual” and who is so accounted by others, who is the ornament and boast of the straitest sect of religionists, is yet a bad neighbour, a treacherous friend, a subservient lacquey, an extortionate dealer, a grinder of the faces of the poor, *but a great lover of the heathen.* Neither meanness, nor falsehood, nor wrong, shall defeat his claim to be called ‘spiritual.’ His heart may be hard, but what of that? His Bible is ever open —He neglects his duties, that he may “cultivate the interests of his soul.”—The delusion, and it is a rife one, were fit matter for a demon’s smile.

CHAPTER IX.

“ Again, I heard the low and sweet voice of the Genius, which said, ‘ You are now on the verge of your own system; will you go further, or return to the earth?’ I replied, ‘ I have left an abode which is damp, and dreary, and dark, and cold; I am ascending into regions of life, and light, and enjoyment.’ ”

SIR HUMPHRY DAVY.

IN a former chapter we have attributed to the gifted recluse of Stanford Rivers the theory of the mundane origin of some at least of the celestial intelligences. But having since met with the ‘ Consolations in Travel,’ that last beautiful effort of the wondrous mind of Davy, we question whether it ought not rather to be

referred to the great chemist. The priority of publication is at all events in his favour. He conjectures that some of these Genii, as he calls them, (the name is good and graceful, though to our ears it has scarcely a serious sound, as associated from our earliest years with the glittering fancies of the Arabian Nights) may have had their first existence on this earth, or some other part of the planetary system.

The planetary life may rightly be considered as one of commencement or initiation, inasmuch as the planets by their annual and diurnal revolution experience an alternation of light and darkness, and this implies in all the animals that live upon their surfaces the need of sleep, and Sleep implies decay and dissolution. Whatever requires repose has in it the principle of death. But the suns of the universe, which are liable to no such vicissi-

tudes, presuppose in all who inhabit *them* a tide of life always maintained at the full, and whose rest is only change of occupation.

Moreover, he conceives that these intelligences may, at death, have been transferred to the sun of their system, as to a higher stage of being, and which, from the considerations just alluded to, must necessarily be incorruptible and immortal.

And in still further progression, he conceives that it may have been given them to enter the cometary worlds, and by them to be borne around the universe with restless violence, to the satiating of the appetite for knowledge.

But this is a poor conception of Davy, that the acquiring knowledge is the ultimate delight of eternity. It is as irrational as to say, that reason is man's highest power. For the truth is that that faculty is merely instrumental, and is no more than a servant of the soul. It is

in effect to say that our nature instead of expanding hereafter, will contract, that our desires will be fewer and our passions less varied. It is to represent the life to come, not as a multiform and many-coloured thing, but as attended with an exclusiveness of view, which here would be tiresome and incompatible with happiness. Whereas we believe that every sentiment of every kind, which we can experience here, whether it be the craving after knowledge, the impulses of heroism and ambition, the desire of power, or of the possession of love and beauty, is but the germ and pledge of a fuller fruition of the same hereafter.

We will now review some of the positions taken in this work relative to angels, and indicate their bearing upon the general subject. Our interest in the question depends on the Divine declaration, that what they are now we shall hereafter be. And, surely, the instances

we have produced from Holy Writ most strongly favour the conjecture that Sex remains a permanent element of celestial society, and, if so, that it will equally belong to our own futurity.

We have seen that the occupations pursued above are as diversified as those pursued below. Offices of care and tenderness, of comfort and soothing, have the best source of their discharge in that unfailing pity which dwells in womanhood. Personal guardianship, too, may probably be referred to them. For one characteristic of the other Sex is that it is with extreme difficulty that they *generalise*, they care for the welfare of individuals, but rarely for that of states or communities.—Patriotism, in its true sense, can scarcely be said to exist among them. Where they attach themselves to one party, it is not that they care much for the success of the general measures advocated by it, but rather

they desire the party to succeed for the sake of the individuals in it whom they love; whose pride they wish to flatter, or their plans to promote. Public spirit is with them almost an affectation, and the eagerness of argument which would evince it serves only to detract from their loveliness. Unrivalled in their influence over the individual, inimitable in their power of soothing or delighting him, inexhaustible in the resources of their love-learned lore, they are weak and powerless in all that relates to classes or grand divisions. The legislative mind does not belong to them, nor the spirit of government. They are powerful to enchant, to purify and sublime the individual spirit, but the welfare of masses is an object which they seldom affect, nor is it desirable that they should. And even in the case of misery, which it is their noble instinct to relieve, it is not the prevention of it for the future which engages their

thoughts, but merely the succour of it at the present. So averse are their minds to abstract schemes and generalised propositions. Even knowledge is sought by them, not so much to slake the thirst of the soul, as to be enabled thereby to appreciate the excellencies of those whom they love, and to create a new title to esteem for themselves. Their souls are bathed in sympathy. Even friendship is for their natures too cold a thing ; their regard is love, or it is nothing.

And, even in affairs of taste, it is by the light of sympathy that they form their decisions. As in the graceful epilogue to that sweetly sylvan play, how well does Rosalind, when, with smiling earnestness she conjures the audience, betray her knowledge of her own Sex in saying—“ I charge you, O women, for the love you bear to men, *to like so much of this*

play as pleases them." It has been untruly asserted, and by no less a person than Collins—

" That ruder Shakspere felt for man alone—"

but, in reply to the charge, and in proof of his all-pervading penetration, we may safely refer to his female characters, which—

" Stand
The unrivalled pictures of his early hand."

Another characteristic let us remark. Her unwearied desire of pleasing, and of winning admiration. A desire, which, to be active, requires only the presence of a being who can admire. To that end all her efforts are bent, all her resources are devoted. What war is to man, the conquest of the heart is to smiling woman. It has enterprizes as resolute, and at least as many stratagems. Her conversation,

her very silence, her mere presence, is, as it were, a skirmish of airs and graces.

She is, moreover, a creature of impulse, and is thereby essentially distinguished from man. His virtues are usually the mingled product of the heart and of self-interest, seldom arrived at without much argument, and usually requiring a stern resolve. While hers are rather the inspiration of a genial nature which performs God's will without seeming to know it.

It is often a touching and a humiliating sight for us to see how often we prove unequal, though equipped with all the appliances of learning, moral science, and profound reflection, to the exercise of a heroism and self-denial, which our milder companion is yet enabled to exert, though bereft of all these aids. "You are," said her lover to *Jeanie Deans*, in that exquisite tale of Scott, which affords so bright an example—

“ Of female patience, winning firm repose—”

“ You are,” said Butler, “ what you always have been—wiser, better, and less selfish in your native feelings than I can be, with all the helps philosophy can give to a Christian.” This difference arises from that tendency to love and sympathy which is the great law of the existence of woman.

With what inimitable fidelity to nature does Milton represent Eve as retiring to her garden, to tend her fruits and flowers, when she perceived by his countenance that Raphael was entering on studious thoughts abstruse, choosing rather to hear the wondrous account from the lips of her husband than from those of the celestial visitant. It was not that the discourse was too high for her, but—

“ Such pleasure she reserved,
Adam relating, she sole auditress ;
Her husband the relator she preferred
Before the angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather ; he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
 With conjugal caresses : from his lip
 Not words alone pleased her.”

Now, man is widely differenced from all this, but is he, therefore, more self-sufficing, is he at all more self-sustained ? Not a whit. Even in Eden he could not be happy alone. Nor could he be pleased or satisfied with a fac simile of himself. He requires not his own Resemblance, but his Contrast. The Almighty has formed the human race in two Contrasts, and all happiness as well as perfection is a middle term resulting from the combined action of both.

In the material creation how frequent are the types of this double constitution of things ! It is the union of two antagonist forces which keeps the planets in their orbits. And the

metaphysician would defy us to find an absolute unity even in the world of thought. Every conception of the mind forms a trinity. No idea, for instance, is more simple than that of Deity. But what have we here? A Creator—the creation—and the connexion existing between them.

We have glanced at the main characteristics of the one Sex, considered in its pure ideal, and as if we had never known it otherwise than what at first it was designed to be. And it is to the original gracious intention of our common Maker that we ought constantly to recur, in the review of our fellow-creatures, as they will then appear to us clothed in unearthly brightness. We may thus see in them, not what they at present are, but what they may at last be restored to. It is by this imagination that we may glorify the scenes of life, making a truth and beauty of our own.

And with regard to the other moiety of the human race, we may remark that the very strength and seriousness of their faculties only renders more precious a milder companionship. It is well remarked by Edmund Burke, " that those persons who creep into our hearts, who are chosen as the companions of our softer hours, and our reliefs from care and anxiety, are never persons of shining qualities nor strong virtues. It is rather the soft green of the soul, on which we rest our eyes, that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects."

The greater the tension of the faculties, the more is the need of relaxation and unbending. And who can best supply this desideratum? In whose presence is it that every care vanishes, and the soul regains her serenity, her verdure, and her fragrance? For this office is required a more airy and delicious spirit than usually resides within the breast of Man, one less ambitious and more attuned to sympathy.

Moreover, believing as we do, that in the next life our affairs will be ~~more~~ momentous, and our interests in them more vital and agitating than what we experience here (there is nothing unpleasing in this prospect, divorced as we shall then be from every animal want, and every humiliating sensation) we naturally conceive that the same divine philanthropy in which Sex originated will also ensure its permanence.

We would repeat the probable conjecture we have before thrown out that the entire society of the universe is formed on the Two Contrasts which this element involves. But our main ground for believing that it will be eternal in the case of the human race consists in this, that the difference in question exists in the spirit, and only *consequentially* in physical organisation, and that without it all mental identity would be lost. And if as great a diversity of occupations exists in the other

world as in this, and therefore a call for as widely differing faculties, here would be another unanswerable argument for its continuance.

But we have now done with arguing the point, and shall endeavour in the next chapter to trace out certain consequences which would flow from our theory.

CHAPTER X.

“ They sin who say that love can die,
 With life all other passions fly,
 All others are but vanity ;
 In heaven ambition cannot dwell,
 Nor avarice in the vaults of hell,
 But love is indestructible.
 Its holy flame for ever burneth,
 From heaven it came, to heaven returneth,
 Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
 At times deceived, at times opprest,
 It here is tried and purified,
 Then hath in heaven its perfect rest.
 It soweth here in toil and care,
 But the harvest time of love is there
 Oh ! when a mother meets on high,
 The babe she lost in infancy,
 Hath she not then for cares and fears
 The day of woe, the watchful night,
 For all her sorrow, all her fears,
 An overpayment of delight.”

SOUTHEY.

WE have given this exquisite passage
 entire, though we do not assent to all its

positions. We conceive that ambition *may* dwell in the realms above, and that her high desires will there be furnished with their counterpart objects. We cannot think that the love of praise will cease there, or be a less active and masterful principle than we find it here. Perhaps the poet himself did not intend so much. But with that exaggeration which suits the fervour of his art, he may have designed only to assert the more paramount sway of love. Or it may be that the assertion was made merely from the necessity of rhyme, that fertile source of the suggestion of ideas, and which, while it seems to fetter thought, more often assists it.

“ How often rhyme the rudder is of verses,
By which, as ships, they steer their courses.”

We have good ground for the exception we have taken—no less than that of Inspiration. For

thus writes the Apostle—" Whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and *if there be any praise*, think on these things." Would he exhort us to encourage a desire of the soul here, which nevertheless will be denied all aliment and gratification hereafter ? Are we now to nurture into strength a principle of action, which is shortly destined to extirpation ? It cannot be. Securely then may we assert that ambition not only *may* but certainly will exist above, seeing that it is a portion of our spiritual nature.

The same we may assert of Sex, and we shall now proceed to develope its results, considered as an indestructible element of our futurity. We shall not argue the question further, until we see what answer can be given to the arguments which we have already offered in defence of that position, and in the use of which we have been even prodigal.

We conceive it would result therefrom that this difference in Soul will have its outward and visible sign in a corresponding difference in Body. As we stated in a former chapter, an immortal and incorruptible body can have no appetites, (we use that term in the precise and definite sense attached to it in all systems of moral philosophy). These appetites (they are three in number) are all equally *accidental*; they serve a temporary purpose which cannot exist in an eternal state, and they are *no part of ourselves*. We thus for ever separate from our theory every idea, which the most sensitively modest would shrink from. In addition to the purity of heart which will be required from all who shall enter that world, we have placed between them and every less sacred thought, the barrier of a physical impossibility.

If it is necessary still further to repel objections from a quarter on which we are naturally

sensitive, we will merely remind the reader, that the primeval state of man was Sexual, and yet consistent with absolute purity. And this is placing our argument in the strongest light, for the Paradisiacal body was of flesh and blood, which we believe the celestial body will not be.

There is no pretence then for objecting to this our creed or conjecture—our favourite and cherished hope, that it derogates in aught from the sanctities of Heaven.

And this will appear the more powerfully from the consideration which follows—It has been often said, that the mental characteristics of Sex arise from a difference of physical organisation. We hold a converse opinion. It is our belief that the Almighty designed to create two *contrasted Spirits*, each to imbibe the excellencies of the other, and to impart its own. And it was His *subsequent* care, to enshrine each of them in such a bodily temple as would

best shadow forth the nature of the indwelling Thought,— that all eyes might admiringly see

“ The soul's translucence through her crystal cell.”

In our theory, Mind was first, and Matter followed as its symbol. Hence we conceive that the peculiarities of the two divisions of our race are quite indestructible, and that as they arose not from the formation of the body, so neither will they be affected by its dissolution. In the language of the Platonic philosophy, they are Ideas, and not Things, and as not involved in the fate of nature, must be held secure in their existence. It is of course not our intention to deny that body reacts on mind, for of that truth we have only too plentiful experience.

The Great Father clothed each spirit in its befitting robe: a robe which half hid and half revealed its brightness. His imagination con-

ceived the plan, and then He gave to it an outward shape and manifestation. Compared with this conception, how base, how grovelling is the creed that the various qualities of mind are *evolved* from a certain material form and texture !

It is to represent man as only a degree more subtle than the other beasts which are in the field, and if more knowing, only on that account more cursed than any.

In thus conceiving that the spirit was first in the Divine thought, *as a substantive creation*, and that a congenial body was afterwards prepared for it, yet not as a part of itself, but merely as its external envelopement, we touch on that great principle which pervades the universe, that matter, though as distinct in its essence from spirit as opposite worlds can be, is yet throughout all its regions one symbol of it. Thus it is that all the scenery of earth is

lighted up with moral signification. Though it has neither speech nor language, yet its voice is heard. It falls on the attentive ear, and fills the breast with answering emotions. Wherever man may roam, he finds the landscape impregnated with character. Every milder sentiment, every loftier passion, every towering and majestic thought has there its counterpart. Nature is to all but the embruted a constant companion, whose sweet persuasions are ever on the side of loveliness and virtue.

When the fever and the turmoil of life hang heavy on the beatings of the heart, one upward glance at the blue smiling heavens animated with wind and sunshine at once recalls us to brighter hopes, and assures us that Goodness and Love and Joy are still bending benignly over us. Who in such a presence does not feel every unholy passion rebuked, every better purpose encouraged? The visible Panorama

then is a system of signs intended to conduct us to the secret pavilion of God

“ Throned in the sun’s descending car,
What power unseen diffuseth far,
 This tenderness of mind ?
What genius smiles on yonder flood ?
What God in whispers from the wood
 Bids every thought be kind ?”

Every wandering air among the leaves is an admonition, every form of vegetable life, each tree or flower is able to gladden or exalt us; sermons among the stones, and good, if we will seek it, everywhere.

But while nature is thus one mighty symbol, and when taken in its whole extent, represents “ the varied God,” and adumbrates his manifold qualities, yet mark how spirit still asserts its superiority and rightful ascendancy over matter. It is mind which lights up the surrounding scene, and enables us to read its

features of beauty and glory. We are not passive recipients of an external influence, though we are very apt to deem that a *cause*, which is only an *occasion*. The opening of the senses serves to kindle the latent fire of the soul—but never yet was able to *create* it.

Yet some would seem to imagine that a certain configuration of earth can call into existence a mental power. The slightest reference to facts would disprove this. Are the natives of sublime and mountainous countries, such as Wales and Switzerland, the most poetical? Have they the most enthusiasm for Art? Has the surrounding greatness imparted an elevation to their national character? All Europe has heard of the mercenary bravoes of Helvetia, but no one has heard the names of her poets or her painters. Neither the grandeur of Jura, nor the smiles of Como, have sufficed to evoke them. One would sooner

search the Low Countries for the one, or the streets of London for the other.

Nor can we give a much brighter account of our nearer neighbours. Though inhabiting so wild and romantic a region they are equally deficient. Taliessin is a sound, and it is nothing more. The Welsh seem to lack the universal energy of the English—the fire of the Irish—the enterprise of the Scotch, and, on every point, to lag miserably in the rear of the three nations. They cling, with tenacity, to a rude jargon which ought long ago to have become obsolete, or deserved to be cherished only as an antiquarian curiosity. We are sorry to say any thing which may sound severe, but these instances do well illustrate our position that mind is proudly superior to aught material, and wholly independent of it. The most awful grandeur of nature cannot create genius, nor can its meagreness or

sterility take it away. It is even so, because in every case it is God's own "authentic fire" unborrowed from the sun. The glory which the poet sees around the visible universe is but a reflexion from his own bright and happy spirit. *He sees without what he already is within.* It is so too in most cases of human attachment.

"The cause of love can never be assigned,
'Tis in no face, but in the lover's mind."

Or, as the metaphysician would render it, Beauty is not a sensation, but an emotion.

But, while we scorn the material philosophy in all its bearings, as stripping man of his dignity and dishonouring his Maker, we only the more keenly feel how dear and precious is that marvellous dispensation, whereby visible things are made the conductors of thought and

feeling ; and of visible things that most significant and symbolical of all, the human form and countenance. The human body is the masterpiece of the Divine Skill, and it is in reference not only to its existence and comfort, but even to its voluptuous sensations, that the elements have been created and combined. All other things have been formed principally to subserve its use and pleasure. It is to refresh our sight, and for the luxury of our footing, that the earth has been carpeted with green. It is to cheer us, that the birds have been taught to carol, and to regale our fancy that the flowers are streaked with innumerable dyes. The lower animals are formed for our wants, and for our sports.

It was a glorious thought of the Deity to form a race of two contrasted divisions, yet whose differences should only provoke love, and inspire interest. It was a task of consum-

mate difficulty so to apportion and adjust their faculties, as to produce harmony and not disorder. Had the reason of woman been stronger, or her attraction less, all would have been marred. Again, if man had been either milder, or sterner, and his heart more or less accessible than we find him constituted, the fortunes of our race would have suffered in consequence, and been more disastrous. Two spirits behoved to be adjusted to each other, and it has been done to perfection. In saying so, we refer to the ideal as it existed in the bosom of God, and to His benign intention. The parallel adjustment was equally marvellous. To quicken from the dust two forms, significant in every member of the hidden disposition, and able to inspire in each other, even at first sight, all the tenderness of passion. It is *through the form* that we love the soul, and all our affections are entwined with the destinies of the

former. Unless then we fancy that the future state will fall short of this in many important respects,—that the necessities of our nature will be less consulted, and our happiness worse provided for than we now find to be the case we must perforce believe, not only that the mental contrasts of sex will survive the grave, but that our bodies too,

“Robed in dazzling immortality,”

will be more than ever felicitously adapted to the excitation of love. To think otherwise is to say that the future frame will be a less perfect and admirable machine than the present one, that its properties will be coarser, and its functions discharged with a less exquisite fineness. Shall not eyes, which can never again grow dim, be much more able to fascinate—to win where they wander, to dazzle where they

dwell ? Shall not ears, which can catch the music of the spheres, thrill more keenly than ever with the varied witcheries of Tone ? Will there be less of grace or beauty of motion ? And shall not the pure languages that are heard above more happily embody the conceptions of the eloquent and fervid soul ?

But some will still object to the idea of personal loves, not perceiving that if the spirit still retains its individuality it will be attracted to some one rather than to others, by an indescribable and mysterious affinity of nature. If it were otherwise, we should cease to be *Persons*, and become *Virtues*. Besides, it is not to similar, but to contrasted, qualities that the soul is secretly attracted, and it is the matching of these which makes the harmony of existence.

The ideal of one sex is sublimity, of the other beauty. The one requires to be sweetened and tranquillised, the other to be strengthened

and raised. Both, however, demand love, and nothing else can "free the hollow heart from paining." To be told of a general regard and a diffusive benevolence as intended hereafter to supply its place is but a mockery of our wants. Love, then, can never cease, and, in the words of the motto of this chapter, "they sin" who say that it can—

" For it is heavenly born, and cannot die,
Being a parcel of the purest sky."

Moreover, love is felt through the magic of the form. That magic will be more potent than we have ever felt it on earth. The celestial body will be more characteristic of the qualities of its owner, than the coarser fabrics we inhabit now. Nothing offends us more than any striking disproportion in this regard. We cannot tolerate it even in names, still less in forms. How appropriate to the one sex

are the rich and vowelled syllables, that fall so gently from the lips, sounding so airy and bright, and could they be exchanged for the shorter and rougher names assigned to the other, without a painful incongruity and sense of violence? Much more, then, may we be assured that in the future state the characteristic qualities of both will retain their characteristic exterior. A spirit of love and gentleness would naturally be invested in a form of more Delicacy, Fragility and Grace—with a softer and smoother surface, a voice more tender and impassioned, and eyes of sweet and fawnlike ray, that ‘comfort and not burn.’ These will continue to difference her from what Mr. Coleridge would call her exact and harmonious Opposite. To this we may add a comparative smallness of frame, and want of power—in short, all the outward signs which help to form beauty, and to provoke love.

The effect of loveliness, too, will be immeasurably enhanced by its never appearing except in dignified situations and under the influence of lofty emotions. How contrary this to present experience will only too painfully suggest itself to every mind.

On the whole, we may safely conclude that the spiritual body will express the subtle variations of character and individuality of mind with a marvellous fineness which we cannot now conceive. Much less can the ineradicable differences which separate the two portions of the human race escape their outward presentation.

We almost venture to say that our thesis has now been established with a prodigality of argument. It remains only that we interpose some cautions

Let none imagine that by resisting the conclusions at which we have arrived, or rather

the conjecture we have formed, they will display more heavenly and spiritual affections. There exists among us much of the infatuation of the Manicheans of old, who had discovered that the Old Testament was unworthy of a God of purity, and rejected it accordingly. If we refuse to admit a constitution of things which the Almighty has planned and perpetuated, we are guilty of a similar folly. Let us not rashly believe that our tastes are more exalted than those of the Ruler of the Universe. Instead of forming theories, let us adopt facts, and we shall be both more modest, and more wise.

Our second caution will be, that in all our speculations on a future State, we forget not the Law of special Retribution. The belief that to every fault or crime will hereafter be annexed a specific penalty, allied to its nature

and baffling its gratification, has ever appeared probable to the consciences of men, and is a prominent idea in all their imaginings of the place of Doom. Every evil habit will receive its due recompence of reward. To the proud man will be assigned a cup of shame and bitter humiliation. The tyrant and the oppressor will have to encounter Furies more gloomy and merciless than themselves. The hard-hearted will appeal for pity to bosoms more unrelenting than their own. The covetous man, whom God abhorreth, will find himself stripped of all, and reduced to everlasting penury. And who will stand securest in that day? The loving and the humble. For these two qualities of Humility and Love above all others, seem to contain the seeds of Eternal Life. For Love is suited to converse with Eternal Love, and Humility to adore perfection. If, then, we long to rejoin, in some brighter sphere, the innocent, and

good, and pure, let us acquire the virtues which distinguish them, while yet there is time. For it is only those who have been lovely in their lives, that in their deaths will be NOT DIVIDED.

APPENDIX I.

In the introductory chapter the Author alludes to Chalmers as asserting the solid materiality of the future scene of our existence. The reader is here presented with an extract from one of his sermons, in which his views on that subject are developed with his usual power of thought, and splendour of diction. The text of it is from Peter. “ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

There is a limit to the revelations of the Bible about futurity, and it were a mental or spiritual trespass to go beyond it. The reserve which it maintains in its informations, we also ought to maintain in our inquiries—satisfied to know little on every subject, where it has communicated little, and feeling our way into regions which are at present unseen, no further than the light of Scripture will carry us.

But while we attempt not to be “wise above that which is written,” we should attempt, and that most studiously, to be wise up to that which is written. The disclosures are very few and very partial, which are given to us of that bright and beautiful economy, which is to survive the ruins of our present one. But, still there are such disclosures—and on the principle of the things that are revealed belonging unto us, we have a right to walk up and down, for the purpose of observation, over the whole actual ex-

tent of them. What is made known of the details of immortality, is but small in the amount, nor are we furnished with the materials of any thing like a graphical or picturesque exhibition of its abodes of blessedness. But still somewhat is made known, and which, too, may be addressed to a higher principle than curiosity, being like every other Scripture, "profitable both for doctrine and for instruction in righteousness."

In the text before us, there are two leading points of information, which we should like successively to remark upon. The first is, that in the new economy which is to be reared for the accommodation of the blessed, there will be materialism, not merely new heavens, but also a new earth. The second is, that as distinguished from the present, which is an abode of rebellion, it will be an abode of righteousness.

I. We know historically that earth, that a

solid material earth, may form the dwelling of sinless creatures, in full converse and friendship with the Being who made them—that, instead of a place of exile for outcasts, it may have a broad avenue of communication with the spiritual world, for the descent of ethereal beings from on high—that, like the member of an extended family, it may share in the regard and attention of the other members, and along with them be gladdened by the presence of him who is the Father of them all. To inquire how this can be, were to attempt a wisdom beyond Scripture: but to assert that this has been, and therefore may be, is to keep most strictly and modestly within the limits of the record. For, we there read, that God framed an apparatus of materialism, which, on his own surveying, he pronounced to be all very good, and the leading features of which may still be recognised among the things and the substances that are around

us—and that he created man with the bodily organs and senses which we now wear—and placed him under the very canopy that is over our heads—and spread around him a scenery, perhaps lovelier in its tints, and more smiling and serene in the whole aspect of it, but certainly made up, in the main, of the same objects that still compose the prospect of our visible contemplations—and there, working with his hands in a garden, and with trees on every side of him, and even with animals sporting at his feet, was this inhabitant of earth, in the midst of all those earthly and familiar accompaniments, in full possession of the best immunities of a citizen of heaven—sharing in the delight of angels, and while he gazed on the very beauties which we ourselves gaze upon, rejoicing in them most as the tokens of a present and presiding Deity. It were venturing on the region of conjecture to affirm, whether, if Adam had

not fallen, the earth that we now tread upon, would have been the everlasting abode of him and his posterity. But certain it is, that man, at the first, had for his place this world, and, at the same time, for his privilege, an unclouded fellowship with God, and, for his prospect, an immortality, which death was neither to intercept nor put an end to. He was terrestrial in respect of condition, and yet celestial in respect both of character and enjoyment. His eye looked outwardly on a landscape of earth, while his heart breathed upwardly in the love of heaven. And though he trode the solid platform of our world, and was compassed about with its horizon—still was he within the circle of God's favoured creation, and took his place among the freemen and the denizens of the great spiritual commonwealth.

This may serve to rectify an imagination, of which we think that all must be conscious—as

if the grossness of materialism was only for those who had degenerated into the grossness of sin; and that, when a spiritualizing process had purged away all our corruption, then, by the stepping stones of a death and a resurrection, we should be born away to some ethereal region, where sense, and body, and all in the shape either of audible sound, or of tangible substance, were unknown. And hence that strangeness of impression which is felt by you, should the supposition be offered, that in the place of eternal blessedness, there will be ground to walk upon; or scenes of luxuriance to delight the corporeal senses; or the kindly intercourse of freinds talking familiarly, and by articulate converse together, or, in short, any thing that has the least resemblance to a local territory, filled with various accommodations, and peopled over its whole extent by creatures formed like ourselves —having bodies such as we now wear, and facul-

ties of perception, and thought, and mutual communication, such as we now exercise. The common imagination that we have of paradise on the other side of death, is, that of a lofty aerial region, where the inmates float in ether, or are mysteriously suspended upon nothing—where all the warm and sensible accompaniments which give such an expression of strength, and life, and colouring, to our present habitation, are attenuated into a sort of spiritual element, that is meagre, and imperceptible, and utterly uninviting to the eye of mortals here below—where every vestige of materialism is done away, and nothing left but certain unearthly scenes that have no power of allurement, and certain unearthly ecstacies, with which it is felt impossible to sympathise. The holders of this imagination forget all the while, that really there is no essential connection between materialism and sin—that the world which we now inhabit,

had all the amplitude and solidity of its present materialism, before sin entered into it—that God so far, on that account, from looking slightly upon it, after it had received the last touch of his creating hand, reviewed the earth, and the waters, and the firmament, and all the green herbage, with the living creatures, and the man whom he had raised in dominion over them, and he saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was all very good. They forget that on the birth of materialism, when it stood out in the freshness of those glories which the great Architect of Nature had impressed upon it, that then “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” They forget the appeals that are made everywhere in the Bible to this material workmanship—and how from the face of these visible heavens, and the garniture of this earth that we tread upon, the greatness and the goodness of God are reflect-

ed on the view of his worshippers. No, my brethren, the object of the administration we sit under, is to extirpate sin, but it is not to sweep away materialism. By the convulsions of the last day, it may be shaken, and broken down from its present arrangements, and thrown into such fitful agitations, as that the whole of its existing framework shall fall to pieces ; and with a heat so fervent as to melt its most solid elements, may it be utterly dissolved. And thus may the earth again become without form and void, but without one particle of its substance going into annihilation. Out of the ruins of this second chaos, may another heaven and another earth be made to arise ; and a new materialism, with other aspects of magnificence and beauty, emerge from the wreck of this mighty transformation ; and the world be peopled as before, with the varieties of material

loveliness, and space be again lighted up into a firmament of material splendour.

Were our place of everlasting blessedness so purely spiritual as it is commonly imagined, then the soul of man, after, at death, having quitted his body, would quit it conclusively. That mass of materialism with which it is associated upon earth, and which many regard as a load and an incumbrance, would have leave to putrify in the grave, without being revisited by supernatural power, or raised again out of the inanimate dust into which it had resolved. If the body be indeed a clog and a confinement to the spirit, instead of its commodious tenement, then would the spirit feel lightened by the departure it had made, and expatriate in all the buoyancy of its emancipated powers, over a scene of enlargement. And this is, doubtless, the prevailing imagination. But why then, after having made its escape from such a thrall-

dom, should it ever recur to the prison-house of its old materialism, if a prison-house it really be. Why should the disengaged spirit again be fastened to the drag of that grosser and heavier substance, which many think has only the effect of weighing down its activity, and infusing into the pure element of mind an ingredient which serves to cloud and to enfeeble it. In other words, what is the use of a day of resurrection, if the union which then takes place is to deaden, or to reduce all those energies that are commonly ascribed to the living principle, in a state of separation? But, as a proof of some metaphysical delusion upon this subject, the product, perhaps, of a wrong though fashionable philosophy, it would appear, that to embody the spirit is not the stepping-stone to its degradation, but to its preferment. The last day will be a day of triumph to the righteous—because the day of the re-entrance of the spirit to its

much-loved abode, where its faculties, so far from being shut up into captivity, will find their free and kindred development in such material organs as are suited to them. The fact of the resurrection proves, that, with man at least, the state of a disembodied spirit, is a state of unnatural violence—and that the resurrection of his body is an essential step to the highest perfection of which he is susceptible. And it is indeed an homage to that materialism, which many are for expunging from the future state of the universe altogether—that ere the immortal soul of man has reached the ultimate glory and blessedness which are designed for it, it must return and knock at that very grave where lie the mouldered remains of the body which it wore—and there inquisition must be made for the flesh, and the sinews, and the bones, which the power of corruption has perhaps for centuries before, assimilated to the

earth that is around them—and there, the minute atoms must be re-assembled into a structure that bears upon it the form and the lineaments, and the general aspect of a man—and the soul passes into this material framework, which is hereafter to be its lodging-place for ever—and that, not as its prison, but as its pleasant and befitting habitation—not to be trammeled, as some would have it, in a hold of materialism, but to be therein equipped for the services of eternity—to walk embodied among the bowers of our second paradise—to stand embodied in the presence of our God.

There will, it is true, be a change of personal constitution between a good man before his death, and a good man after his resurrection—not, however, that he will be set free from his body, but that he will be set free from the corrupt principle which is in his body—not that the materialism by which he is now surrounded

will be done away, but that the taint of evil by which this materialism is now pervaded, will be done away. Could this be effected without dying, then death would be no longer an essential stepping-stone to paradise. But it would appear of the moral virus which has been transmitted downwards from Adam and is now spread abroad over the whole human family—it would appear, that to get rid of this, the old fabric must be taken down, and reared anew ; and that, not of other materials, but of its own materials, only delivered of all impurity, as if by a refining process in the sepulchre. It is thus, that what is “sown in weakness, is raised in power”—and for this purpose, it is not necessary to get quit of materialism, but to get quit of sin, and so to purge materialism of its malady. It is thus that the dead shall come forth incorruptible—and those, we are told, who are alive at this great catastrophe, shall suddenly and mysteriously be

changed. While we are compassed about with these vile bodies, as the apostle emphatically terms them, evil is present, and it is well, if through the working of the Spirit of grace, evil does not prevail. To keep this besetting enemy in check, is the task and the trial of our Christianity on earth—and it is the detaching of this poisonous ingredient which constitutes that for which the believer is represented as groaning earnestly, even the redemption of the body that he now wears, and which will then be transformed into the likeness of Christ's glorified body. And this will be his heaven, that he will serve God without a struggle, and in a full gale of spiritual delight—because with the full concurrence of all the feelings and all the faculties of his regenerated nature. Before death, sin is only repressed—after the resurrection, sin will be exterminated. Here he has to maintain the combat, with a tendency to evil

till lodging in his heart, and working a perverse movement among his inclinations ; but after his warfare in this world is accomplished, he will no longer be so thwarted—and he will set him down in another world, with the repose and the triumph of victory for his everlasting reward. The great constitutional plague of his nature will no longer trouble him ; and there will be the charm of a genial affinity between the purity of his heart, and the purity of the element he breathes in. Still it will not be the purity of spirit escaped from materialism, but of spirit translated into a materialism that has been clarified of evil. It will not be the purity of souls unclothed as at death, but the purity of souls that have again been clothed upon at the resurrection.

But the highest homage that we know of to materialism, is that which God, manifest in the flesh, has rendered to it. That He, the Divinity,

should have wrapt his unfathomable essence in one of its coverings, and expatiated amongst us in the palpable form and structure of a man ; and that he should have chosen such a tenement, not as a temporary abode, but should have borne it with him to the place which he now occupies, and where he is now employed in preparing the mansions of his followers—that he should have entered within the vail, and be now seated at the right hand of the Father, with the very body which was marked by the nails upon his cross, and wherewith he ate and drank after his resurrection—that he who repelled the imagination of his disciples, as if they had seen a spirit, by bidding them handle him and see, and subjecting to their familiar touch, the flesh and the bones that encompassed him ; that he should now be throned in universal supremacy, and wielding the whole power of heaven and earth have every knee to bow at his name, and every

tongue to confess, and yet all to the glory of God the Father—that humanity, that substantial and embodied humanity, should thus be exalted, and a voice of adoration from every creature, be lifted up to the Lamb for ever and ever—does this look like the abolition of materialism, after the present system of it is destroyed ; or does it not rather prove, that transplanted into another system, it will be preferred to celestial honours, and prolonged in immortality throughout all ages ?

It has been our careful endeavour, in all that we have said, to keep within the limits of the record, and to offer no other remarks than those which may fitly be suggested by the circumstance, that a new earth is to be created, as well as a new heaven, for the future accommodation of the righteous. We have no desire to push the speculation beyond what is written—but it were, at the same time, well, that in all

our representations of the immortal state, there was just the same force of colouring, and the same vivacity of scenic exhibition, that there is in the New Testament. The imagination of a total and diametric opposition between the region of sense and the region of spirituality, certainly tends to abate the interest with which we might otherwise look to the perspective that is on the other side of the grave; and to deaden all those sympathies that we else might have with the joys and the exercises of the blest in paradise. To rectify this, it is not necessary to enter on the particularities of heaven—a topic on which the Bible is certainly most sparing and reserved in its communications. But a great step is gained, simply by dissolving the alliance that exists in the minds of many between the two ideas of sin and materialism; or proving, that when once sin is done away, it consists with all we know of God's administration, that mate-

rialism shall be perpetuated in the full bloom and vigour of immortality. It altogether holds out a warmer and more alluring picture of the elysium that awaits us, when told that there, will be beauty to delight the eye ; and music to regale the ear ; and the comfort that springs from all the charities of intercourse between man and man, holding converse as they do on earth, and gladdening each other with the benevolent smiles that play on the human countenance, or the accents of kindness that fall in soft and soothing melody from the human voice. There is much of the innocent, and much of the inspiring, and much to affect and elevate the heart, in the scenes and the contemplations of materialism—and we do hail the information of our text, that after the dissolution of its present frame-work, it will again be varied and decked out anew in all the graces of its unfading verdure, and of its unbounded variety—that in

addition to our direct and personal view of the Deity, when he comes down to tabernacle with men, we shall also have the reflection of him in a lovely mirror of his own workmanship—and that instead of being transported to some abode of darkness and of mystery, so remote from human experience, as to be beyond all comprehension, we shall walk for ever in a land replenished with those sensible delights, and those sensible glories, which, we doubt not, will lie most profusely scattered over the “new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

II. But though a paradise of sense, it will not be a paradise of sensuality. Though not so unlike the present world as many apprehend it, there will be one point of total dissimilarity betwixt them. It is not the entire substitution of spirit for matter, that will distinguish the future economy from the present. But it will

be the entire substitution of righteousness for sin. It is this which signalizes the Christian from the Mahometan paradise—not that sense, and substance, and splendid imagery, and the glories of a visible creation seen with bodily eyes, are excluded from it,—but that all which is vile in principle, or voluptuous in impurity, will be utterly excluded from it. There will be a firm earth, as we have at present, and a heaven stretched over it, as we have at present; and it is not by the absence of these, but by the absence of sin, that the abodes of immortality will be characterised. There will both be heavens and earth, it would appear, in the next great administration—and with this speciality to mark it from the present one, that it will be a heaven and an earth, “wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Now, though the first topic of information that we educed from the text, may be regarded

as not very practical, yet the second topic on which I now insist, is most eminently so. Were it the great characteristic of that spirituality which is to obtain in a future heaven, that it was a spirituality of essence, then occupying and pervading the place from which materialism had been swept away, we could not, by any possible method, approximate the condition we are in at present, to the condition we are to hold everlastingly. We cannot etherealise the matter that is around us—neither can we attenuate our own bodies, nor bring down the slightest degree of such a heaven to the earth that we now inhabit. But when we are told that materialism is to be kept up, and that the spirituality of our future state lies not in the kind of substance which is to compose its framework, but in the character of those who people it—this puts, if not the fulness of heaven, at least a foretaste of heaven, within our reach. We have not to

strain at a thing so impracticable, as that of diluting the material economy, which is without us—we have only to reform the moral economy that is within us. We are now walking on a terrestrial surface, not more compact, perhaps, than the one we shall hereafter walk upon ; and are now wearing terrestrial bodies, not firmer and more solid, perhaps, than those we shall hereafter wear. It is not by working any change upon them, that we could realize, to any extent our future heaven. And this is simply done by opening the door of our heart for the influx of heaven's affections--by bringing the whole man, as made up of soul, and spirit, and body, under the presiding authority of heaven's principles.

APPENDIX II.

The author in the body of the work having occasion to allude to the Adoration of the Virgin Mary, has ventured to say that the practice, though evil in itself, had still its compensation. He conceives that it was not without its countervailing benefits. But on this point he gladly quotes the testimony of Mr. Milman, to whose views on this subject every enlarged and philosophic mind will cordially assent.

“ The most natural, most beautiful, and most universal, though perhaps the latest developed,

of these new forms of Christianity, that which tended to the poetry of the religion, and acted as the conservator of Art, particularly of painting, till at length it became the fount of that refined sense of the beautiful, that which was the inspiration of modern Italy, was the worship of the Virgin. Directly that Christian devotion expanded itself beyond its legitimate objects ; as soon as prayers or hymns were addressed to any of those beings who had acquired sanctity from their connection or co-operation with the introduction of Christianity into the world ; as soon as the apostles and martyrs had become hallowed in the general sentiment, as more especially the objects of the divine favour and of human gratitude, the virgin mother of the Saviour appeared to possess peculiar claims to the veneration of the Christian world. The worship of the Virgin, like most of the other tenets which grew out of

Christianity, originated in the lively fancy and fervent temperament of the East, but was embraced with equal ardour, and retained with passionate constancy in the West.

The higher importance assigned to the female sex by Christianity, than by any other form at least of Oriental religion, powerfully tended to the general adoption of the worship of the Virgin, while that worship reacted on the general estimation of the female sex. Women willingly deified (we cannot use another adequate expression) this perfect representative of their own sex, while the whole sex was elevated in general sentiment by the influence ascribed to their all-powerful patroness. The ideal of this sacred being was the blending of maternal tenderness with perfect purity—the two attributes of the female character which man, by his nature, seems to hold in the highest admiration and love; and this image con-

stantly presented to the Christian mind, calling forth the gentler emotions, appealing to, and giving, as it were, the divine sanction to, domestic affections, could not be without its influence. It operated equally on the manners, the feelings, and in some respect on the inventive powers of Christianity. The gentleness of the Redeemer's character, the impersonation of the divine mercy in his whole beneficent life, had been in some degree darkened by the fierceness of polemic animosity. The religion had assumed a sternness and severity arising from the mutual and recriminatory condemnations. The opposite parties denounced eternal punishments against each other with such indiscriminate energy that hell had become almost the leading and predominant image in the Christian dispensation. This advancing gloom was perpetually softened; this severity, allayed by the impulse of gentleness and purity, suggested by

this new form of worship. It kept in motion that genial under-current of more humane feeling; it diverted and estranged the thought from this harassing strife to calmer and less exciting objects. The dismal and the terrible, which so constantly haunted the imagination, found no place during the contemplation of the Mother and the Child which, when once it became enshrined in the heart, began to take a visible and external form. The image arose out of, and derived its sanctity from a natural impulse, which in its turn, especially when, at a later period, real art breathed life into it, strengthened the general feeling to an incalculable degree."

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY,

Vol. 3. p. 544.

The author has corroborated his opinion by a reference to Wordsworth, whose beautiful

Sonnet on this subject he here subjoins, merely
premising the Errare mallem—

“ Mother ! whose virgin-bosom was uncrost
With the least shade of thought to sin allied,
Woman ! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature’s solitary boast ;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost,
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven’s blue coast,
Thy Image falls to earth, yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible power in which did blend
All that was mixt and reconciled in Thee,
Of mother’s hope with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene.”

ECCLESIASTICAL SKETCHES.

APPENDIX III.

THE reader will find in the following quotation an idea, which was merely adverted to at the close of the Essay, here developed with great power and effect.

“ There may be those, perhaps, who would resent it as a trivial and unworthy supposition that a Heaven can be anything except a grave convocation of rational worshippers, convened in perpetuity upon ethereal clouds, and occupied for ever in one and the same ecstatic manner. But having this mundane portion of the

Creation under our eyes, we are impelled to conceive very differently of the Universe, and of the principles which will be found to prevail throughout it.

Is it not the style and mode of the Supreme Creative Intelligence to take the widest range, and to include endless varieties and interminable gradations of power and faculty in the circle of his works? Nothing of that stern pursuit of single purposes which belongs to ourselves, when intently moved, seems to attach to the creation. Man is absorbed in his immediate object, if that object be important in his view; but God is always at leisure, and while accomplishing the stupendous purposes of the moral and spiritual scheme, finds time and means for replenishing the elements with insect life, and for decorating all surfaces with gay vegetation.

How very far is it from being true, for example, within the vegetable kingdom, that no

ends are kept in view beyond the mere subser-
viency of each order and species to the uses of
the orders next above it! On the contrary,
there is everywhere a free exuberance, a co-
piousness, a versatility, and an unchecked love
of embellishment and beauty, such as put
shame on the supposition, that the rule of a dry
utility has been followed as the law of the crea-
tion. In truth, the *uses* which any one species
may be thought to subserve appear, most often,
to be rather adjunctive than principal, and seem
-an accidental circumstance, thrown in upon the
main design. But if a rule so rich and free be
indeed the law of the Creative Power, it will
show itself in all worlds; and most of all in
those warm and resplendent spheres, where the
elementary conditions are such as peculiarly to
favour its development.

The prejudices (not perhaps very culpable)

of a somewhat morbid spirituality might perhaps lead us to distaste the animated world around us, as God's work, and impel us to be scandalised at some of its conditions. This was the principle of the ancient Manichean doctrine which gave a bold and distinct expression to this order of prejudices; for it was plainly avowed by the authors of that system, that they could not admit the present world, with its animal species, to be the work of supreme benevolence, wisdom and purity. Nothing is more dangerous than to indulge notions which tend to make us think our tastes and principles more refined and elevated than those of the Creator and Ruler of the universe. Something of this infatuation very commonly besets ardent and abstracted minds. In this way it is conceivable that the realities of the upper world, when first they open upon minds imbued with

prepossessions of this kind, may excite a recoil and an amazement, such as may try the principles of piety.

Let it just be conceived of that a spirit, born and trained in some pure ethereal region of reason and love, and where no orders of creatures inferior to itself had ever been seen or heard of, and where the attributes of Deity, in the most abstract mode of their expression, had alone been contemplated ; let it be supposed that such a spirit were told it should be taken where the Creative Power had put itself forth in quite another manner ; and then that it should be brought, without further preparation, to this planet of ours, and be placed in the depth of a teeming wilderness of the torrid zone, and there left to examine not only the luxuriance and beauty of the vegetable orders, but the forms, instincts, habits, of the insect tribes, and of the reptiles, the birds, the qua-

drupeds, which people the sultry forest. Now although ourselves, with the preparation we have gone through, are in a position to admire these various orders, and in fact to derive from this very source, a main portion of the evidence of our natural theology, may it not readily be imagined that, to a pure spirit, such a one as we have here supposed, the effect of the exhibition, and of all its details, would be to generate a sort of wonder, not unmixed with perplexity, or even distress?

Something perhaps analogous to this may await the human mind when, after having entertained abstract notions of the Divine Nature, and in forming which we have consulted our own narrow conceptions of what *ought to be* instead of coolly considering what *is*, we are introduced into another domain of God's universal empire, where, instead of the meagre and colourless outline which had stood before our

poor imaginations, we behold the rich and various products of the Infinite Intelligence; all indeed bright and good:—but good in a sense related to infinite, not to finite reason. Now the products of infinite power and absolute wisdom not merely surpass our powers and our notions in *dimensions*, but in kind also, and in their leading principles—That is to say, the Universe is not only more vast than we can measure or conceive of; but it is probably more various than we are apt, or willing to imagine; and moreover it involves and exhibits motives or reasons of procedure, such as would by no means have occurred to us, as natural, or as abstractedly fit, considered in relation to what we assume concerning the divine attributes.”

PHYSICAL THEORY OF ANOTHER LIFE,
Chap. xvi.

END.

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